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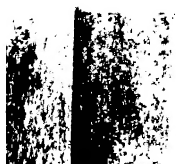
**Euripides: Ion.
Hippolytus.
Medea.
Alcestis**

Euripides

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EURIPIDES

IV

EURIPIDES

WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY
ARTHUR S. WAY, D.Lit.

IN FOUR VOLUMES

IV

ION HIPPOLYTUS MEDEA
ALCESTIS



LONDON: WILLIAM HEINEMANN
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INTRODUCTION

THE life of Euripides coincides with the most strenuous and most triumphant period of Athenian history, strenuous and triumphant not only in action, but in thought, a period of daring enterprise, alike in material conquest and development, and in art, poetry, and philosophic speculation. He was born in 480 B.C., the year of Thermopylae and Salamis. Athens was at the height of her glory and power, and was year by year becoming more and more the City Beautiful, when his genius was in its first flush of creation. He had been writing for more than forty years before the tragedy of the Sicilian Expedition was enacted; and, *felix opportunitate mortis*, he was spared the knowledge of the shameful sequel of Arginusae, the miserable disaster of Aegospotami, the last lingering agony of famished Athens. He died more than a year before these calamities befell.

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His father was named Mnesarchides, his mother Kleito. They must have been wealthy, for their son possessed not only considerable property (he had at least once to discharge a "liturgy,"¹ and was "proxenus," or consul, for Magnesia, costly duties both), but also, what was especially rare then, a valuable library. His family must have been well-born, for it is on record that he took part as a boy in certain festivals of Apollo, for which any one of mean birth would have been ineligible.

He appeared in the dramatic arena at a time when it was thronged with competitors, and when it must have been most difficult for a new writer to achieve a position. Aeschylus had just died, after being before the public for 45 years: Sophocles had been for ten years in the front rank, and was to write for fifty years longer, while there were others, forgotten now, but good enough to wrest the victory from these at half the annual dramatic competitions at least. Moreover, the new poet was not content to achieve excellence along the lines laid down by his predecessors and already marked with the stamp of public approval. His genius was original, and he

¹ Perhaps the expense, or part-expense, of equipping a war-ship.

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followed it fearlessly, and so became an innovator in his handling of the religious and ethical problems presented by the old legends, in the literary setting he gave to these, and even in the technicalities of stage-presentation. As originality makes conquest of the official judges of literature last, and as his work ran counter to a host of prejudices, honest and otherwise,¹ it is hardly surprising that his plays gained the first prize only five times in fifty years.

But the number of these official recognitions is no index of his real popularity, of his hold on the hearts, not only of his countrymen, but of all who spoke his mother-tongue. It is told how on two occasions the bitterest enemies of Athens so far yielded to his spell, that for his sake they spared to his conquered countrymen, to captured Athens, the last horrors of war, the last humiliation of the vanquished. - After death he became, and remained, so long as Greek was a living language, the most popular and the most influential of the three great masters of the drama. His nineteenth-century eclipse has been followed by a reaction in which he is recognised as

¹ "He was baited incessantly by a rabble of comic writers, and of course by the great pack of the orthodox and the vulgar."—MURRAY.

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presenting one of the most interesting studies in all literature.

In his seventy-third year he left Athens and his clamorous enemies, to be an honoured guest at the court of the king of Macedon. There, unharassed by the malicious vexations, the political unrest, and the now imminent perils of Athens, he wrote with a freedom, a rapidity, a depth and fervour of thought, and a splendour of diction, which even he had scarcely attained before.

He died in 406 B.C., and, in a revulsion of repentant admiration and love, all Athens, following Sophocles' example, put on mourning for him. Four plays, which were part of the fruits of his Macedonian leisure, were represented at Athens shortly after his death, and were crowned by acclamation with the first prize, in spite of the attempt of Aristophanes, in his comedy of *The Frogs*, a few months before, to belittle his genius.

His characteristics, as compared with those of his two great brother-dramatists, may be concisely stated thus :—

Aeschylus sets forth the operation of *great principles*, especially of the certainty of divine retribution, and of the persistence of sin as an ineradicable plague-

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taint. He believes and trembles. Sophocles depicts *great characters*: he ignores the malevolence of destiny and the persistent power of evil: to him "man is man, and master of his fate." He believes with unquestioning faith. Euripides propounds *great moral problems*: he analyses human nature, its instincts, its passions, its motives; he voices the cry of the human soul against the tyranny of the supernatural, the selfishness and cruelty of man, the crushing weight of environment. He questions: "he will not make his judgment blind."

Of more than 90 plays which Euripides wrote, the names of 81 have been preserved, of which 19 are extant—18 tragedies, and one satyric drama, the *Cyclops*. His first play, *The Daughters of Pelias* (lost) was represented in 455 B.C. The extant plays may be arranged, according to the latest authorities, in the following chronological order of representation, the dates in brackets being conjectural: (1) *Rhesus* (probably the earliest); (2) *Cyclops*; (3) *Alcestis*, 438; (4) *Medea*, 431; (5) *Children of Hercules*, (429–427); (6) *Hippolytus*, 428; (7) *Andromache*, (430–424); (8) *Hecuba*, (425); (9) *Suppliants*, (421); (10) *Madness of Hercules*, (423–420); (11) *Ion*, (419–416); (12) *Daughters of Troy*, 415; (13) *Electra*, (413);

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(14) *Iphigeneia in Taurica*, (414–412); (15) *Helen*, 412 ;
(16) *Phoenician Maidens*, (411–409) ; (17) *Orestes*, 408 ;
(18) *Bacchanals*, 405 ; (19) *Iphigeneia in Aulis*, 405.

In this edition the plays are arranged in three main groups, based on their connexion with (1) the Story of the Trojan War, (2) the Legends of Thebes, (3) the Legends of Athens. The *Alcestis* is a story of old Thessaly. The reader must, however, be prepared to find that the Trojan War series does not present a continuously connected story, nor, in some details, a consistent one. These plays, produced at times widely apart, and not in the order of the story, sometimes present situations (as in *Hecuba*, *Daughters of Troy*, and *Helen*) mutually exclusive, the poet not having followed the same legend throughout the series.

The Greek text of this edition may be called eclectic, being based upon what appeared, after careful consideration, to be the soundest conclusions of previous editors and critics. In only a few instances, and for special reasons, have foot-notes on readings been admitted. Nauck's arrangement of the choruses has been followed, with few exceptions.

The translation (first published 1894–1898) has been revised throughout, with two especial aims,
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closer fidelity to the original, and greater lucidity in expression. It is hoped that the many hundreds of corrections will be found to bring it nearer to the attainment of these objects. The version of the *Cyclops*, which was not included in the author's translation of the Tragedies, has been made for this edition. This play has been generally neglected by English translators, the only existing renderings in verse being those of Shelley (1819), and Wodhull (1782).

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ION

VOL. IV.

B

ARGUMENT

IN the days when Erechtheus ruled over Athens, Apollo wrought violence to the king's young daughter Creusa. And she, having borne a son, left him, by reason of her fear and shame, in the cave wherein the God had humbled her. But Apollo cared for him, and caused the babe to be brought to Delphi, even to his temple. Therein was the child nurtured, and ministered in the courts of the God's house. And in process of time Erechtheus died, and left no son nor daughter save Creusa, and evil days came upon Athens, that she was hard bestead in war. Then Xuthus, a chief of the Achæan folk, fought for her and prevailed against her Euboean enemies, and for guerdon of victory received the princess Creusa to wife, and so became king-consort in Athens. But to these twain was no child born; so, after many years, they journeyed to Delphi to inquire of the oracle of Apollo touching issue. And there the God ordered all things so that the lost was found, and an heir was given to the royal house of Athens. Yet, through the blind haste of mortals, and their little faith, was the son well-nigh slain by the mother, and the mother by the son.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΕΡΜΗΣ

ΙΩΝ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΙΔΩΝ ΚΡΕΟΥΣΗΣ

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΗΣ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ ΚΡΕΟΥΣΗΣ

ΠΤΩΙΑ *ἦτοι* ΠΡΟΦΗΤΙΣ

ΑΘΗΝΑ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

HERMES, *the messenger of the Gods.*

ION, *son of Apollo and Creusa.*

CREUSA, *Queen of Athens, Daughter of Erechtheus, and wife of Xuthus.*

XUTHUS, *an Achaean chief, king-consort of Athens.*

OLD SERVANT (*of Erechtheus formerly, then of Creusa*)

SERVANT (*of Xuthus*).

PYTHIA, *the Prophetess of the temple.*

ATHENA, *Patron-goddess of Athens.*

CHORUS, *consisting of Handmaids attendant on Creusa.*

Attendants, priests, guards, and Delphian citizens.

SCENE: *At Delphi, in the fore-court of the temple of Pythian Apollo, who is called also Phoebus, and Loxias. The great altar of sacrifice stands in the centre.*

ΙΩΝ

ΕΡΜΗΣ

Ατλας, ὁ χαλκίοισι νώτοις οὐρανὸν
 θεῶν παλαιὸν οἶκον ἐκτρίβων, θεῶν
 μίᾳς ἔφυσε Μαίαν, ἥ 'μ' ἐγένετο
 Ἑρμῆν μεγίστῳ Ζηνί, δαιμόνων λάτριν.
 ἦκω δὲ Δελφῶν τήνδε γῆν, ἔν' ὀμφαλὸν
 μέσον καθίζων Φοῖβος ὑμνωδεῖ βροτοῖς
 τά τ' ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα θεσπίζων αἰεὶ.
 ἔστιν γὰρ οὐκ ἄσημος Ἑλλήνων πόλις,
 10 τῆς χρυσολόγχου Παλλάδος κεκλημένη,
 οὐ παῖδ' Ἑρεχθέως Φοῖβος ἔξευξεν γάμοις
 βίᾳ Κρέουσαν, ἔνθα προσβόρρους πέτρας
 Παλλάδος ὑπ' ὄχθῳ τῆς Ἀθηναίων χθονὸς
 Μακρὰς καλοῦσι γῆς ἄνακτες Ἀθίδος.
 ἀγνώς δὲ πατρί, τῷ θεῷ γὰρ ἦν φίλον,
 γαστρὸς διήνεγκ' ὄγκον· ὥς δ' ἦλθεν χρόνος,
 τεκοῦσ' ἐν οἴκοις παῖδ' ἀπήνεγκεν βρέφος
 εἰς ταῦτ' ἄντρον οὐπὲρ ἠνιάσθη θεῷ
 20 Κρέουσα, κακτίθησιν ὥς θανούμενον
 κοίλῃς ἐν ἀντίπηγος εὐτρόχῳ κύκλῳ,
 προγόνων νόμον σφάζουσα τοῦ τε γηγενοῦς
 Ἑριχθονίου· κείνῳ γὰρ ἡ Διὸς κόρη
 φρουρῶ παραζεύξασα φύλακε σώματος
 δισσὼ δράκοντε, παρθένοις Ἀγλαυρίσι

ION

Enter HERMES.

HERMES

ATLAS, whose brazen shoulders wear the base
Of heaven, the ancient home of Gods, begat
Of a certain Goddess¹ Maia, which bare me,
Hermes, heaven's messenger, to Zeus most high.
Now to this Delphian land I come, where Phoebus
Hath at earth's navel his prophetic seat,
Revealing things that are and things to be.

There is a famous city of the Greeks,
Named Burg of Pallas of the Golden Spear.
There Phoebus forced Erechtheus' child Creusa, 10
Where the north-facing rocks, beneath the Mount
Of Pallas in the Athenian land, are called
The Long Cliffs by the lords of Attica.
Naught knew her sire—for this was Phoebus'
will—

The burden 'neath her heart; but in due time
She travailed in his halls, and brought the babe
Unto the selfsame cave wherein the God
Had humbled her, and left it there to die
In the fair-rounded hollow of an ark, 20
Still keeping the tradition of her race
And earth-born Erichthonius, by whom
Zeus' Daughter set for warders of his life
Two serpents, ere to the Agrauid maids

¹ Pleione, daughter of Ocean.

δίδωσι σφάζειν· ὅθεν Ἑρεχθείδαις ἔτι
 νόμος τις ἔστιν ὄφεισιν ἐν χρυσηλάτοις
 τρέφειν τέκν'. ἀλλ' ἦν εἶχε παρθένος χλιδὴν
 τέκνω προσάψασ' ἔλιπεν ὡς θανουμένῳ.
 καὶ μ' ὦν ἀδελφὸς Φοῖβος αἰτεῖται τάδε·
 30 ὦ σύγγον', ἐλθὼν λαὸν εἰς αὐτόχθονα
 κλεινῶν Ἀθηνῶν, οἴσθα γὰρ θεᾶς πόλιν,
 λαβὼν βρέφος νεογνὸν ἐκ κοίλης πέτρας
 αὐτῷ σὺν ἄγγει σπαργάνοισι θ' οἷς ἔχει
 ἔνεγκε Δελφῶν τὰ μὰ πρὸς χρηστήρια
 καὶ θεὸς πρὸς αὐταῖς εἰσόδοις δόμων ἐμῶν.
 τὰ δ' ἄλλ', ἐμὸς γάρ ἐστιν, ὡς εἰδῆς, ὁ παῖς,
 ἡμῖν μελήσει. Λοξία δ' ἐγὼ χάριν
 πράσσω· ἀδελφῷ πλεκτὸν ἐξάρας κύτος
 ἤνεγκα καὶ τὸν παῖδα κρηπιδὼν ἐπι
 40 τίθημι ναοῦ τοῦδ', ἀναπτύξας κύτος
 εἰλικτὸν ἀντίπηγος, ὡς ὀρῶθ' ὁ παῖς.
 κυρεῖ δ' ἅμ' ἱππεύοντος ἡλίου κύκλῳ
 προφητὴς εἰσβαίνουσα μαντεῖον θεοῦ·
 ὄψιν δὲ προσβαλοῦσα παιδὶ νηπίῳ
 ἐθαύμασ' εἴ τις Δελφίδων τλαίῃ κόρη
 λαθραῖον ὠδῖν' εἰς θεοῦ ῥίψαι δόμον,
 ὑπὲρ δὲ θυμέλας διορίσαι πρόθυμος ἦν·
 οἶκτῳ δ' ἀφῆκεν ὠμότητα, καὶ θεὸς
 συνεργὸς ἦν τῷ παιδὶ μὴ ἔκπεσεῖν δόμων.
 τρέφει δὲ νιν λαβοῦσα· τὸν σπεύραντα δὲ
 50 οὐκ οἶδε Φοῖβον οὐδὲ μητέρ' ἧς ἔφν,
 ὁ παῖς τε τοὺς τεκόντας οὐκ ἐπίσταται.
 νέος μὲν οὖν ὦν ἀμφὶ βωμίους τροφὰς
 ἡλᾶτ' ἀθύρων· ὡς δ' ἀπηνδρώθη δέμας,
 Δελφοί σφ' ἔθεντο χρυσοφύλακα τοῦ θεοῦ
 ταμίαν τε πάντων πιστόν, ἐν δ' ἀνακτόροις

ION

She gave the babe to nurse. For this cause there
 The Erechtheids use to hang about their babes
 Serpents of gold. Yea, broidery from her robe
 She tied to her babe, and left him, as for death.
 Then did my brother Phoebus ask me this :
 "Go, brother, to the earth-born folk of Athens
 The glorious,—for thou know'st Athena's burg,— 30
 And from the rock-cleft take a babe new-born,
 With cradle and with swaddling-bands withal,
 And bear to Delphi, to mine oracle,
 And set him at my temple's entering-in.
 All else be mine: for this—that thou mayst
 know,—
 Is my son." For a grace to Loxias
 My brother, took I up the woven ark,
 And bare, and on the basement of this fane
 I set him, opening first the cradle's lid
 With-woven, that the boy might so be seen. 40
 And, as the sun drove forth his chariot, passed
 A priestess into the prophetic shrine,
 Who, casting eyes upon the wordless babe,
 Marvelled that any Delphian maid should dare
 Into the God's house fling her child of shame,
 And o'er the holy pale in zeal had thrust ;
 But pity banished cruelty: yea, the God
 Wrought that the boy be not cast forth his fane.
 So took she him and nursed, nor knew the sire
 Was Phoebus, nor the reckling's mother knew ; 50
 Nor knows the boy who brought him into life.
 So did the youngling round the altars sport
 That fed him. When to manhood waxed his
 frame,
 The Delphians made him treasurer of the God,
 And trusted steward of all ; and in the fane

- θεοῦ καταξῇ δεῦρ' αἰὲ σεμνὸν βίον.
 Κρέουσα δ' ἡ τεκοῦσα τὸν νεανίαν
 Ξούθῳ γαμείται συμφορᾶς τοιαύτῃ ὑπο.
 ἦν ταῖς Ἀθήναις τοῖς τε Χαλκωδοντίδαις,
 60 οἱ γῆν ἔχουσ' Εὐβοῖδα, πολέμιος κλύδων
 ὃν συμπονήσας καὶ ξυνεξελὼν δορί
 γάμων Κρεούσης ἀξίωμ' ἐδέξατο,
 οὐκ ἐγγενὴς ὢν, Αἰόλου δὲ τοῦ Διὸς
 γεγὼς Ἀχαιός· χρόνια δὲ σπείρας λέχη
 ἄτεκνός ἐστι, καὶ Κρέουσ'· ὢν εἵνεκα
 ἤκουσι πρὸς μαντεῖ' Ἀπόλλωνος τάδε,
 ἔρωτι παίδων. Λοξίας δὲ τὴν τύχην
 εἰς τοῦτ' ἐλαύνει, κοῦ λέληθεν, ὥς δοκεῖ.
 70 δώσει γὰρ εἰσελθόντι μαντεῖον τόδε
 Ξούθῳ τὸν αὐτοῦ παῖδα, καὶ πεφυκέναι
 κείνου σφε φήσει, μητρὸς ὡς ἐλθὼν δόμους
 γνωσθῇ Κρεούσῃ, καὶ γάμοι τε Λοξίου
 κρυπτοὶ γένωνται παῖς τ' ἔχῃ τὰ πρόσφορα.
 Ἴωνα δ' αὐτόν, κτίστορ' Ἀσιάδος χθονός,
 ὄνομα κεκλήσθαι θήσεται καθ' Ἑλλάδα.
 ἀλλ' εἰς δαφνώδη γύαλα βήσομαι τάδε,
 τὸ κρανθὲν ὡς ἂν ἐκμάθω παιδὸς πέρι.
 ὁρῶ γὰρ ἐκβαίνοντα Λοξίου γόνον
 τόνδ', ὡς πρὸ ναοῦ λαμπρὰ θῆ πυλῶματα
 80 δάφνης κλάδοισιν. ὄνομα δ', οὐ μέλλει τυχεῖν,
 Ἴων' ἐγὼ σφε πρῶτος ὀνομάζω θεῶν.

ἄρματα μὲν τάδε λαμπρὰ τεθρίππων
 ἥλιος ἤδη λάμπει κατὰ γῆν,
 ἄστρα δὲ φεύγει πῦρ τόδ' ἀπ' αἰθέρος

ION

He liveth to this day a hallowed life.
 But she, Creusa, that had borne the lad,
 Was wed to Xuthus, by such hap as this :--
 A surge of war 'twixt Athens rose and them
 That in Euboea hold Chalcidice ; 60
 Then on their side he fought, and smote their foes,
 And for his guerdon won Creusa's hand—
 An alien, yet Achæan born, and son
 Of Aeolus son of Zeus. But, after years
 Of wedlock, childless are they, for which cause
 To this shrine of Apollo have they come,
 Yearning for seed. Now Loxias guides their fate
 Hereto, nor hath forgotten, as might seem.
 He shall give Xuthus, when he entereth,
 His own child, saying to him, " Lo, thy son," 70
 That the lad, coming home, made known may be
 Unto Creusa, Loxias' deed abide
 Unknown, and so the child may have his right.
 And Ion shall he cause him to be called
 Through Greece, the founder of an Asian realm.
 Now to yon hollow bay-embowered I go
 To watch how destiny dealeth with the lad.
 For yonder see I Loxias' child come forth
 To make the temple-portals bright with boughs
 Of bay. And by the name that he shall bear, 80
 Ion, do I first name him of the Gods. [Exit.

Enter ION, followed by a throng of Delphian worshippers.

ION

Lo, yonder the Sun-god is turning to earthward his
 splendour-blazing
 Chariot of light ;
 And the stars from the firmament flee from the fiery
 arrows chasing,

- εἰς νύχθ' ἱεράν,
 Παρηησιάδες δ' ἄβατοι κορυφαὶ
 καταλαμπόμεναι τὴν ἡμερίαν
 ἀψίδα βροτοῖσι δέχονται.
 90 σμύρνης δ' ἀνύδρου καπνὸς εἰς ὀρόφους
 Φοίβου πέτεται.
 θάσσει δὲ γυνὴ τρίποδα ζάθεον
 Δελφίς, αἰίδουσ' Ἑλλησι βοάς,
 ἃς ἂν Ἀπόλλων κελαδήσῃ.
 ἀλλ', ὦ Φοίβου Δελφοὶ θέραπες,
 τὰς Κασταλίας ἀργυροειδεῖς
 βαίνετε δίνας, καθαραῖς δὲ δρόσοις
 φαιδρυνάμενοι στείχετε ναοὺς·
 στόμα τ' εὖφημον φρουρεῖτ' ἀγαθόν,
 φήμας τ' ἀγαθὰς
 100 τοῖς ἐθέλουσιν μαντεύεσθαι
 γλώσσης ἰδίας ἀποφαίνειν.
 ἡμεῖς δὲ, πόνους οὐς ἐκ παιδὸς
 μοχθοῦμεν αἰεὶ, πτόρθοισι δάφνης
 στέφεσιν θ' ἱεροῖς ἐσόδους Φοίβου
 καθαρὰς θήσομεν, ὑγραῖς τε πέδον
 ῥανίσιν νοτερόν, πτηνῶν τ' ἀγέλας,
 αἰ βλάπτουσιν σέμν' ἀναθήματα,
 τόξοισιν ἐμοῖς φυγάδας θήσομεν·
 110 ὥς γὰρ ἀμήτωρ ἀπάτωρ τε γεγὼς
 τοὺς θρέψαντας
 Φοίβου ναοὺς θεραπεύω.

ἄγ' ὦ νευθαλὲς ὦ
 καλλίστας προπόλευμα δάφνας,
 ἃ τὰν Φοίβου θυμέλαν
 σαίρεις, ὑπὸ ναοῖς

στρ.

ION

To the sacred night :

And the crests of Parnassus untrodden are flaming
and flushed, as with yearning [daylight returning
Of welcome to far-flashing wheels with the glory of
To mortal sight.

To the roof-ridge of Phoebus the fume of the incense
of Araby burning

As a bird taketh flight. [Maiden 90

On the tripod 'most holy is seated the Delphian
Chanting to children of Hellas the wild cries, laden

With doom, from the lips of Apollo that ring.

Delphians, Phoebus's priesthood-train,

Unto Castaly's silvery-swirling spring

Pass ye, and cleanse with the pure spray-rain

Your bodies, or ever ye enter his fane.

Set a watch on the door of your lips ; be there heard

Nothing but good in the secret word

That ye murmur to them whose hearts be stirred 100

To seek to his shrine, that they seek not in vain.

And I in the toil that is mine—mine now, [bough,

And from childhood up,—with the bay's young

And with wreathèd garlands holy, will cleanse

The portals of Phoebus ; with dew from the spring

Will I sprinkle his pavement, and chase far thence

With the shaft from the string

The flocks of the birds : the defilers shall flee

From his offerings holy. Nor mother is mine

Neither father : his temple hath nurtured me, 110

And I serve his shrine.

Come, branch in thy freshness yet blowing, (*Str.*)

God's minister, loveliest bay,

Over the altar-steps glide :

In the gardens immortal, beside

ΙΩΝ

κήπων ἐξ ἀθανάτων,
 ἵνα δρόσοι τέγγουσ' ἱεραί,
 †τὰν ἀέναον παγὰν
 120 ἐκπροΐῃσαι
 μυρσίνας, ἱερὰν φόβαν
 ἃ σαίρω δάπεδον θεοῦ
 παναμέριος ἄμ' ἀλίου
 πτέρυγι θοᾷ
 λατρεύων τὸ κατ' ἡμαρ.
 ὦ Παιὰν ὦ Παιάν,
 εὐαίων εὐαίων
 εἷης, ὦ Λατοῦς παῖ.

130 καλὸν γε τὸν πόνον, ὦ
 Φοῖβε, σοὶ πρὸ δόμων λατρεύω
 τιμῶν μαντεῖον ἔδραν·
 κλεινὸς δ' ὁ πόνος μοι
 θεοῖσιν δούλαν χέρ' ἔχειν,
 οὐ θνατοῖς ἀλλ' ἀθανάτοις·
 εὐφάμους δὲ πόνους μοχθεῖν
 οὐκ ἀποκάμνω.
 Φοῖβός μοι γενέτωρ πατήρ·
 τὸν βόσκοντα γὰρ εὐλογῶ,
 τὸ δ' ὠφέλιμον ἐμοὶ πατέρος
 140 ὄνομα λέγω,
 Φοῖβου τοῦ κατὰ ναόν.
 ὦ Παιὰν ὦ Παιάν,
 εὐαίων εὐαίων
 εἷης, ὦ Λατοῦς παῖ.

ἀντ.

ἀλλ' ἐκπαύσω γὰρ μόχθους
 δάφνας ὀλκοῖς,

ION

His temple, hath burgeoned thy pride,
Where the sacred waters are flowing
Through a veil of the myrtle spray,
A fountain that leapeth aye
O'er thy tresses divine to pour. 120
I wave thee o'er Phoebus' floor
As the sun's wing soars sudden-glowing.
Such service is mine each day.
O Healer, O Healer-king,
Let blessing on blessing upring
Unto Leto's Son as I sing!

'Tis my glory, the service I render (Ant.)
In thy portals, O Phoebus, to thee!
I honour thy prophet-shrine. 130
Proud labour is mine—it is thine!
I am thrall to the Gods divine:
Not to men, but Immortals, I tender
My bondage; 'tis glorious and free:
Never faintness shall fall upon me.
For my father thee, Phoebus, I praise,
Who hast nurtured me all my days:
My begetter, mine help, my defender
This temple's Phoebus shall be.
O Healer, O Healer-king, 140
Let blessing on blessing upring
Unto Leto's Son as I sing!

But—for now from the toil I refrain
Of the bay-boughs softly trailing,—

χρυσέων δ' ἐκ τευχέων ρίψω
 γαίας παγάν,
 ἂν ἀποχεύονται
 Κασταλίας δῖναι,
 νοτερὸν ὕδωρ βάλλων,
 150 ὅσιος ἀπ' εὐνᾶς ὦν.
 εἴθ' οὕτως αἰεὶ Φοῖβῳ
 λατρεύων μὴ παυσαίμαν,
 ἢ παυσαίμαν ἀγαθᾷ μοίρᾳ.

ἔα ἔα·
 φοιτῶσ' ἤδη λείπουσιν τε
 πτανοὶ Παρνασοῦ κοίτας·
 αὐδῶ μὴ χρίμπτειν θριγκοῖς
 μηδ' εἰς χρυσήρεις οἴκους.
 μάρψω σ' αὖ τόξοις, ὦ Ζηνὸς
 160 κῆρυξ, ὀρνίθων γαμφηλαῖς
 ἰσχὺν νικῶν.

ὁδε πρὸς θυμέλας ἄλλος ἐρέσσει
 κύκνος· οὐκ ἄλλα
 φοινικοφαῇ πόδα κινήσεις ;
 οὐδέν σ' ἅ φόρμιγξ ἅ Φοῖβου
 σύμμολπος τόξων ῥύσαιτ' ἄν·
 πάραγε πτέρυγας,
 λίμνας ἐπίβα τᾶς Δηλιάδος·
 αἰμάξεις, εἰ μὴ πείσει,
 τὰς καλλιφθόγγους ῥόδας.

170 ἔα ἔα·
 τίς ὁδ' ὀρνίθων καινὸς προσέβα ;
 μῶν ὑπὸ θριγκοὺς εὐναίας
 καρφηρὰς θήσων τέκνοις ;

ION

From the pitchers of gold shall I rain
The drops from the breast unfailing
Of the earth that spring
Where the foambell-ring
Round Castaly's fount goeth sailing.
It rains, it rains from my fingers fast,
From the hands of the undefiled wide-cast. 150
O that to Phoebus for ever so
I might render service, nor respite know,
Except unto happier lot I go !

Flights of birds are seen approaching.

Ho there, ho there !
Even now are they flocking, the fowl of the air,
On Parnassus forsaking each crag-hung lair.
Touch not, I warn ye, the temple's coping,
Nor the roofs with the glistening gold slant-sloping.
Ha, my bow shall o'ertake thee again from afar,
Zeus' herald, whose talons victorious war
On the birds that strongest are. 160

Lo, yonder the pinion-oars come rowing
Of another, a swan, to the altar :—away !
Speed hence thy feet in the dawn rose-glowing ;
Else Phoebus's lyre, that accordeth its lay
To thy notes, from death shall redeem not thee.
Waft onward thy wings of snow :
Light down on the Delian mere oversea,
Lest the blood-rush choke, if thou do not so,
Thy sweet throat's melody.

Ha, what new fowl cometh hitherward winging ? 170
Under our coping fain would he build
A nest for his young from the stubble-field ?

ΙΩΝ

ψαλμοί σ' εἵρξουσιν τόξων.
οὐ πείσει ; χωρῶν δίνας
τὰς Ἀλφειοῦ παιδούργει
ἢ νάπος Ἰσθμιον,
ὥς ἀναθήματα μὴ βλάπτηται
ναοί θ' οἱ Φοίβου.

180

κτείνειν δ' ὑμᾶς αἰδοῦμαι
τοὺς θεῶν ἀγγέλλοντας φάμας
θνατοῖς· οἷς δ' ἔγκειμαι μόχθοις,
Φοίβω δουλεύσω, κοῦ λήξω
τοὺς βόσκοντας θεραπεύων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ α'

οὐκ ἐν ταῖς ζαθέαις Ἀθά-
ναις εὐκλινες ἦσαν αὐ-
λαὶ θεῶν μόνον, οὐδ' ἀγνι-
άτιδες θεραπείαι·
ἀλλὰ καὶ παρὰ Λοξία
τῷ Λατοῦς διδύμων προσώ-
πων καλλιβλέφαρον φῶς.

στρ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ β'

180

ἰδοὺ τάνδ', ἄθρησον,
Λερναῖον ὕδραν ἐναίρει
χρυσέαις ἄρπαις· ὁ Διὸς παῖς·
φίλα, πρόσιδ' ὄσσοις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ α'

ἄθρῳ, καὶ πέλας ἄλλος αὐ-
τοῦ πανὸν πυρίφλεκτον αἵ-
ρει τις· ἄρ' ὃς ἐμαῖσι μυ-
θεύεται παρὰ πῆναις

ἀντ.

ION

It shall hold thee aloof, my bow's fierce singing !
 Wilt thou heed not? Away, let thy nurslings hide
 Where the swirls of Alpheius coil and slide,
 Or mid Isthmian glens and groves,
 That the offerings undefiled may abide,
 And the temples that Phoebus loves.

Loth were I to slaughter such as ye,
 Which bear unto mortals the augury 180
 Of the Gods : but a burden is laid upon me :
 I am Phœbus' thrall, and I will not refrain
 My service to them that my life sustain.

*Enter CHORUS of Creusa's Handmaids. They move to
 right and left, admiring the sculptures on the walls
 of the temple. Members of Chorus chant in
 turn :—*

CHORUS 1

Not in Athens alone then, the city divine, (Str.)
 Stand courts of the Gods, with line on line
 Of stately columns ; nor service is thine
 There only, O Highway-king.
 Lo here, how in Loxias' holy place
 The son of Latona hath splendour and grace
 Of a twofold-gleaming temple-face.

CHORUS 2

Ah, look thou, behold this thing— 190
 How with golden scimitar Zeus' Son here
 Slayeth the hydra of Lerna's mere :
 Dear, one glance hitherward fling !

CHORUS 1

I see it :—and lo, where another anigh (Ant.)
 Is uplifting a flame-wrapped torch on high !
 Who is it—who? On my broidery
 Is the hero's story told ?

ΙΩΝ

200

ἀσπιστὰς Ἴδλαος, δς
κοινοὺς αἰρόμενος πόνους
Δίῳ παιδὶ συναντλεῖ ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ γ'
καὶ μὰν τόνδ' ἄθρησον
πτεροῦντος ἔφεδρον ἵππου·
τὰν πῦρ πνέουσαν ἐναίρει
τρισώματον ἀλκάν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ α'
παντᾶ τοι βλέφαρον διώ-
κω. σκέψαι κλόνον ἐν τείχε-
σι λαῖνοισι Γιγάντων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ δ'
ὦδε δερκόμεθ', ὦ φίλαι,†

210

ΧΟΡΟΣ ε'
λεύσσεις οὖν ἐπ' Ἑγκελάδῳ
γοργωπὸν πάλλουσας ἵτυν ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ ς'
λεύσσω Παλλάδ', ἐμὰν θεόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ζ'
τί γάρ, κεραυνὸν
ἀμφίπυρον ὄβριμον ἐν Διὸς
ἐκηβόλοισι χερσίν ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ η'
ὀρῶ, τὸν δάιον
Μίμαντα πυρὶ καταιθαλοῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ θ'
καὶ Βρόμιος ἄλλον ἀπολέμοισι
κισσῖνοισι βάκτροις
ἐναίρει Γᾶς τέκνων ὁ Βακχεύς.

ION

Is it not Iolaüs, the warrior there,
Who had part in the dread emprise, and a share
In the burdens that Zeus's scion bare ? 200

CHORUS 3

Lo, lo, this other behold
Who rideth a winged horse, dealing death
To a dragon that vomiteth fiery breath,
A monster of shape threefold.

CHORUS 1

O yea, mine eyes turn swiftly on all
But O, see there on the marble wall
The battle-rout of the giant horde !

CHORUS 4

Yea, friends, we be gazing thitherward.

CHORUS 5

Dost mark who there on the stricken field
O'er Enceladus waveth her Gorgon-shield ? 210

CHORUS 6

Pallas, my Goddess !—I see her stand !

CHORUS 7

Lo, lo, where the bolt flame-flashing
Gleameth in Zeus' far-hurling hand
In resistless rush down-crashing.

CHORUS 8

I see :—upon Mimas his foe is the brand
With its blasting wildfire dashing.

CHORUS 9

And the earth-born there—no battle-wand
Is the ivy-encircled thyrsus-rod
That slays him, of Bromius, Reveller-god.

ΙΩΝ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ι'

220

σέ τοι τὸν παρὰ ναὸν αὐ-
δῶ· θέμις γυάλων ὑπερ-
βῆναι λευκῇ ποδὶ βηλόν ; ¹

ΙΩΝ

οὐ θέμις, ὦ ξέναι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ια'

οὐδ' ἂν ἐκ σέθεν ἂν πυθοίμαν αὐδάν ;

ΙΩΝ

τίνα τήνδε θέλεις ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ ια'

ἄρ' ὄντως μέσον ὀμφαλὸν
γᾶς Φοίβου κατέχει δόμος ;

ΙΩΝ

στέμμασί γ' ἐνδυτόν, ἀμφὶ δὲ γοργόνες.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ιβ'

οὕτω καὶ φάτις αὐδᾶ.

ΙΩΝ

εἰ μὲν ἐθύσατε πέλανον πρὸ δόμων
καί τι πυθέσθαι χρήζετε Φοίβου,
πάριτ' εἰς θυμέλας, ἐπὶ δ' ἀσφάκτοις
μήλοισι δόμων μὴ πάριτ' εἰς μυχόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ιγ'

230

ἔχω μαθοῦσα·
θεοῦ δὲ νόμον οὐ παραβαίνομεν·
ἃ δ' ἐκτός, ὄμμα τέρψει.

ΙΩΝ

πάντα θεᾶσθ', ὅ τι καὶ θέμις, ὄμμασι.

¹ Hermann : for ποδὶ γ' of MSS.

ION

CHORUS 10 (*addressing* ION)

Sir,—thou by the fane,—I would speak unto thee :

Prithee say, if with bare feet lawful it is
That the threshold we pass of the sanctuary. 220

ION

Nay, strangers, forfended is this.

CHORUS 11

Yet haply a thing I would learn wouldst thou show?

ION

What is this that thou cravest to know?

CHORUS 11

Is it so, that the walls of Phoebus rise

Even there, where Earth's mid-navel lies?

ION

Yea : and with wreaths is it hung, and watched by
the Gorgon-eyes.

CHORUS 12

Ay, rumour hath published it so.

ION

If a cake ye have cast on the forecourt's altar-fire,
And if there be aught that of Phoebus ye fain would
inquire,

Draw nigh to the altar-steps : into the inner fane
Pass none, but with bloodshed of sheep for the
sacrifice slain.

CHORUS 13

All this understand I aright :

We would trespass on naught by the God's law
hidden : 230

Enough is without for our feast of sight.

ION

Let your eyes gaze on upon all unforbidden.

ΙΩΝ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ιδ'

μεθείσαν δεσπόται
με θεοῦ γύαλα τάδ' εἰσιδεῖν.

ΙΩΝ

δμωαὶ δὲ τίνων κλήζεσθε δόμων ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ ιε'

Παλλάδος ἔνοικα τρόφιμα μέλαθρα
τῶν ἐμῶν τυράννων·
παρούσας δ' ἀμφὶ τὰσδ' ἐρωτᾷς.

ΙΩΝ

240 γενναιότης σοι, καὶ τρόπων τεκμήριον
τὸ σχῆμ' ἔχεις τόδ', ἥτις εἰ ποτ', ὦ γύναι.
γνοίῃ δ' ἂν ὡς τὰ πολλὰ γ' ἀνθρώπου πέρι
τὸ σχῆμ' ἰδὼν τις εἰ πέφυκεν εὐγενής.

ἔα·
ἀλλ' ἐξέπληξάς μ', ὄμμα συγκλήσασα σὸν
δακρύοις θ' ὑγράνας· εὐγενὴ παρηίδα,
ὡς εἶδες ἀγνὰ Λοξίου χρηστήρια.
τί ποτε μερίμνης εἰς τόδ' ἦλθες, ὦ γύναι ;
οὐ πάντες ἄλλοι γύαλα λεύσσοντες θεοῦ
χαίρουσιν, ἐνταῦθ' ὄμμα σὸν δακρυρροεῖ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

250 ὦ ξένε, τὸ μὲν σὸν οὐκ ἀπαιδεύτως ἔχει
εἰς θαύματ' ἐλθεῖν δακρύων ἐμῶν πέρι·
ἐγὼ δ' ἰδοῦσα τούσδ' Ἀπόλλωνος δόμους
μνήμην παλαιὰν ἀνεμετρησάμην τινά·
οἴκοι δὲ τὸν νοῦν ἔσχον ἐνθάδ' οὐσά περ.
ὦ τλήμονες γυναῖκες· ὦ τολμήματα
θεῶν. τί δῆτα ; ποῖ δίκην ἀνοίσομεν,
εἰ τῶν κρατούντων ἀδικίαις ὀλούμεθα ;

ΙΩΝ

τί χρῆμ' ἀνερμήνευτα δυσθυμεῖ, γύναι ;

ION

CHORUS 14

Our lady had given us leave,—“Upon all
These shrines,” hath she said, “may ye gaze.”

ION

And the servants ye name you of what lord's hall?

CHORUS 15

In Pallas's dwelling-place
Is the mansion of princes that nurtured me;—
But of whom thou inquirest, lo, here is she.

Enter CREUSA.

ION

High birth is thine, and carriage consonant
Thereto, O lady, whosoe'er thou be.
Yea, in a man oft-times may one discern,
Marking his bearing, strain of gentle blood. 240
Ha, thou dost move me strangely!—down-dropt
eyes,
And noble cheeks all wet with rain of tears,
At sight of Loxias' pure oracle!
How cam'st thou, lady, 'neath such load of care?
Where all beside, beholding the God's shrines,
Rejoice, a fountain is thine eye of tears.

CREUSA

Stranger, I count it not discourtesy
That thou shouldst marvel touching these my tears.
But, looking on Apollo's dwelling-place,
I traversed o'er an ancient memory's track: 250
Afar my thoughts were, and my body here.
Ah, wrongs of women!—wrongful-reckless deeds
Of Gods! For justice where shall we make suit,
If 'tis our Lords' injustice crushes us?

ION

Lady, for what veiled grief art thou cast down?

ΙΩΝ

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐδέν· μεθῆκα τόξα· τὰπὶ τῷδε δέ
ἐγὼ τε σιγῶ καὶ σὺ μὴ φρόντιζ' ἔτι.

ΙΩΝ

τίς δ' εἶ ; πόθεν γῆς ἦλθες ; ἐκ ποίου πατρὸς
πέφυκας ; ὄνομα τί σε καλεῖν ἡμᾶς χρεών ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

280 Κρέουσα μὲν μοι τοῦνομ', ἐκ δ' Ἐρεχθέως
πέφυκα, πατρὶς γῆ δ' Ἀθηναίων πόλις.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ κλεινὸν οἰκοῦσ' ἄστρῳ γενναίων τ' ἄπο
τραφεῖσα πατέρων, ὥς σε θαυμάζω, γύναι.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τοσαῦτα κεῦτυχοῦμεν, ὦ ξέν', οὐ πέρα.

ΙΩΝ

πρὸς θεῶν ἀληθῶς, ὥς μεμύθευται βροτοῖς,

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τί χρημ' ἐρωτᾷς, ὦ ξέν' ; ἐκμαθεῖν θέλω.

ΙΩΝ

ἐκ γῆς πατρός σου πρόγονος ἔβλασται πατήρ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

Ἐριχθόνιός γε· τὸ δὲ γένος μ' οὐκ ὠφελεῖ.

ΙΩΝ

ἦ καί σφ' Ἀθάνα γῆθεν ἐξανείλετο ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

270 εἰς παρθένους γε χεῖρας, οὐ τεκοῦσά νιν.

ΙΩΝ

δίδωσι δ', ὥσπερ ἐν γραφῇ νομίζεται ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

Κέκροπός γε σφύζειν παισὶν οὐκ ὁρώμενον.

ΙΩΝ

ἤκουσα λῦσαι παρθένους τεύχος θεᾶς.

ION

CREUSA

Naught : I have sped my shaft : as touching this,
Nothing I say, nor thou conjecture aught.

ION

Who art thou ? What thy country ? Of what sire
Wert born ? What name is meet we name thee by ?

CREUSA

Creusa I, of King Erechtheus born : 260
The Athenians' city is my fatherland.

ION

O dweller in a glorious burg, and sprung
Of noble sires !—blest I account thee, lady.

CREUSA

Thus far, nor farther, stranger, goes my weal.

ION

Ah, is it true, the legend told to men—

CREUSA

What wouldst thou, stranger, ask ? I fain would learn.

ION

That from the earth thy father's grandsire sprang ?

CREUSA

Yea, Erichthonius :—me his birth avails not.

ION

And did Athena take him forth the earth ?

CREUSA

Yea, in her maiden arms : no mother she. 270

ION

And gave it, as the pictured legend tells—

CREUSA

To Cecrops' daughters to be nursed unseen.

ION

The maids unsealed, I heard, Athena's ark.

ΙΩΝ

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τοιγὰρ θανούσαι σκόπελον ἤμαξαν πέτρας.

ΙΩΝ

εἶεν·

τί δαί τόδ' ; ἄρ' ἀληθὲς ἡ μάτην λόγος ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τί χρημ' ἐρωτᾷς ; καὶ γὰρ οὐ κάμνω σχολῇ.

ΙΩΝ

πατὴρ Ἐρεχθεὺς σὰς ἔθυσσε συγγόνους ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἔτλη πρὸ γαίας σφάγια παρθένους κτανεῖν.

ΙΩΝ

σὺ δ' ἐξεσώθης πῶς κασιγνήτων μόνη ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

280 βρέφος νεογνὸν μητρὸς ἦν ἐν ἀγκάλαις.

ΙΩΝ

πατέρα δ' ἀληθῶς χάσμα σὸν κρύπτει χθονός ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

πληγαὶ τριαίνης ποντίου σφ' ἀπώλεσαν.

ΙΩΝ

Μακραὶ δὲ χώρος ἐστ' ἐκεῖ κεκλημένος ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τί δ' ἱστορεῖς τόδ' ; ὥς μ' ἀνέμνησάς τιнос.

ΙΩΝ

τιμᾶ σφε Πύθιος ἀστραπαὶ τε Πύθιαι ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τιμᾶ—τί τιμᾶ ; ¹ μήποτ' ὄφελόν σφ' ἰδεῖν.

ΙΩΝ

τί δέ ; στυγεῖς σὺ τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ φίλτατα ;

¹ Hermann : for MSS. τιμᾶ τιμᾶ.

ION

CREUSA

Then hurled themselves down blood-sprent cliffs to death.

ION

Ah, so !

And this—true is it, or an idle tale ?—

CREUSA

What wouldst thou ask ? My leisure serveth me.

ION

Thy sisters did thy sire Erechtheus slay ?

CREUSA

He endured to sacrifice them for his land.

ION

How wast thou only of thy sisters saved ?

CREUSA

A babe new-born in mother's arms was I.

280

ION

And did earth yawning verily hide thy sire ?

CREUSA

The Sea-god's trident smote him and destroyed.

ION

The Long Cliffs—is a place so named therein ?

CREUSA

Why dost ask this ?—thou wak'st a memory.

ION

Phoebus with Pythian lightnings honours them.

CREUSA

Honours them, quotha ! O to have seen them never !

ION

What ?—hatest thou the God's haunt well-beloved ?

ΙΩΝ

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐδέν· ξύνοιδ' ἄντροισιν αἰσχύνην τινά.

ΙΩΝ

πόσις δὲ τίς σ' ἔγην' Ἀθηναίων, γύναι ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

290 οὐκ ἀστός, ἀλλ' ἐπακτὸς ἐξ ἄλλης χθονός.

ΙΩΝ

τίς ; εὐγενῇ νιν δεῖ πεφυκέναι τινά.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

Ξοῦθος, πεφυκὼς Αἰόλου Διὸς τ' ἄπο.

ΙΩΝ

καὶ πῶς ξένος σ' ὦν ἔσχεν οὔσαν ἐγγενῇ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

Εὐβοί' Ἀθήναις ἔστι τις γείτων πόλις·

ΙΩΝ

ὄροις ὑγροῖσιν, ὡς λέγουσ', ὠρισμένη.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ταύτην ἔπερσε Κεκροπίδαις κοινῷ δορί.

ΙΩΝ

ἐπίκουρος ἐλθὼν ; κατὰ σὸν γαμεῖ λέχος ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

φερνάς γε πολέμου καὶ δορὸς λαβὼν γέρας.

ΙΩΝ

σὺν ἀνδρὶ δ' ἦκεις ἡ μόνη χρηστήρια ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

300 σὺν ἀνδρί. σηκοῖς δ' ἐνστρέφει Τροφωνίου.

ΙΩΝ

πότερα θεατῆς ἡ χάριν μαντευμάτων ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

κείνου τε Φοίβου θ' ἐν θέλων μαθεῖν ἔπος.

ΙΩΝ

καρποῦ δ' ὑπὲρ γῆς ἦκετ', ἡ παίδων πέρι ;

ION

CREUSA

Naught.—I and that cave know a deed of shame.

ION

And what Athenian, lady, is thy lord ?

CREUSA

No citizen. An outland alien. 290

ION

Who?—sooth, of princely birth must he have been.

CREUSA

Xuthus, the seed of Aeolus and Zeus.

ION

How might an alien win thee, native-born ?

CREUSA

A neighbour state, Euboea, Athens hath ;—

ION

Sundered by watery marches, as they tell.

CREUSA

This smote he, spear-ally of Cecrops' sons.

ION

Their war-aid?—and thereafter won thine hand ?

CREUSA

His dower of battle, guerdon of his spear.*

ION

With thy lord com'st thou hither, or alone ?

CREUSA

With him. He lingereth at Trophonius' cave. 300

ION

To gaze thereon, or for an oracle ?

CREUSA

One thing of him and Phoebus would he learn.

ION

For increase of the land, or sons, come ye ?

ΙΩΝ

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἄπαιδές ἐσμεν, χρόνι' ἔχοντ' εὐνήματα.

ΙΩΝ

οὐδ' ἔτεκες οὐδὲν πώποτ', ἀλλ' ἄτεκνος εἶ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὁ Φοῖβος οἶδε τὴν ἐμὴν ἀπαιδίαν.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ τλήμον, ὡς τᾶλλ' εὐτυχοῦς' οὐκ εὐτυχεῖς.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

σὺ δ' εἶ τίς ; ὥς σου τὴν τεκοῦσαν ὠλβισα.

ΙΩΝ

τοῦ θεοῦ καλοῦμαι δούλος εἰμί τ', ὦ γύναι.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

310 ἀνάθημα πόλεως, ἥ τινος πραθεῖς ὑπο ;

ΙΩΝ

οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἔν' Λοξίου κεκλήμεθα.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἡμεῖς σ' ἄρ' αὐθις, ὦ ξέν', ἀντοικτεῖρομεν.

ΙΩΝ

ὥς μὴ εἰδόθ' ἦτις μ' ἔτεκεν ἐξ ὄτου τ' ἔφυν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ναοῖσι δ' οἰκεῖς τοισίδ' ἡ κατὰ στέγας ;

ΙΩΝ

ἅπαν θεοῦ μοιδῶμ', ἵν' ἂν λάβῃ μ' ὕπνος.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

παῖς δ' ὦν ἀφίκου ναὸν ἡ νεανίας ;

ΙΩΝ

βρέφος λέγουσιν οἱ δοκοῦντες εἰδέναι.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

καὶ τίς γάλακτί σ' ἐξέθρεψε Δελφίδων ;

ΙΩΝ

οὐπώποτ' ἔγνων μαστόν· ἡ δ' ἔθρεψέ με—

ION

CREUSA

Childless we are, who have been wedded long.

ION

Never hast thou borne issue, barren all ?

CREUSA

Phoebus doth know what childlessness is mine.

ION

Blest in all else, sad heart, unblest in this !

CREUSA

And who art thou ? Blessed the womb that bare thee !

ION

Lady, the God's thrall I am called, and am.

CREUSA

Some city's offering ?—or in slave-mart sold ? 310

ION

I know but this—I am called Loxias' thrall.

CREUSA

I then in turn, O stranger, pity thee.

ION

As one that never sire nor mother knew.

CREUSA

Dwellest thou in this temple, or a house ?

ION

The God's wide halls be mine when I would sleep.

CREUSA

A child, or stripling, cam'st thou to the fane ?

ION

A babe was I, say they who best should know.

CREUSA

And who of Delphi's daughters gave thee suck ?

ION

Never I knew the breast. Mine only nurse—

ΙΩΝ

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

320 . τίς, ὦ ταλαίπωρ'; ὡς νοσοῦσ' ἡὔρον νόσους.

ΙΩΝ

Φοίβου προφήτης, μητέρ' ὡς νομίζομεν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

εἰς δ' ἄνδρ' ἀφίκου τίνα τροφήν κεκτημένος ;

ΙΩΝ

βωμοί μ' ἔφερβον οὐπιών τ' αἰὲ ξένος.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τάλαινά σ' ἦ τεκούσα· τίς ποτ' ἦν ἄρα ;

ΙΩΝ

ἀδίκημά του γυναικὸς ἐγενόμην ἴσως.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἔχεις δὲ βίοντον ; εὖ γὰρ ἤσκησαι πέπλοις.

ΙΩΝ

τοῖς τοῦ θεοῦ κοσμούμεθ', ᾧ δουλεύομεν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐδ' ἦξας εἰς ἔρευναν ἐξευρεῖν γονάς ;

ΙΩΝ

ἔχω γὰρ οὐδέν, ὦ γύναι, τεκμήριον.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

φεῦ·

330 πέπονθέ τις σῇ μητρὶ ταῦτ' ἄλλη γυνή.

ΙΩΝ

τίς ; εἰ πόνου μοι ξυλλάβοι, χαίρομεν ἄν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἦς εἶνεκ' ἦλθον δεῦρο πρὶν πόσιν μολεῖν.

ΙΩΝ

ποιὸν τι χρήζουσ' ; ὡς ὑπουργήσω, γύναι.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

μάντευμα κρυπτὸν δεομένη Φοίβου μαθεῖν.

ION

CREUSA

Who, child of sorrow? I find my wound in thine! 320

ION

Was Phoebus' priestess: her I count my mother.

CREUSA

How nurtured hast thou come to man's estate?

ION

The altars fed me: each chance stranger gave.

CREUSA

Woe is thy mother! Ah, and who was she?

ION

I am record haply of a woman's wrong.

CREUSA

And hast thou wealth?—for rich is thine attire.

ION

Of Him is mine adorning, whom I serve.

CREUSA

But on thy birth's track hast thou never pressed?

ION

Ah, lady, clue hereunto have I none.

CREUSA

(*Sighs.*) There's one was even as thy mother
wronged.

330

ION

Who?—would she share my burden, glad were I.

CREUSA

For her sake came I, while delays my lord.

ION

And what thy quest? Lady, mine help is thine.

CREUSA

Craving a secret oracle of Phoebus.

ΙΩΝ

ΙΩΝ

λέγοις ἄν· ἡμεῖς τᾶλλα προξενήσομεν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἄκουε δὴ τὸν μῦθον· ἀλλ' αἰδούμεθα.

ΙΩΝ

οὐ τᾶρα πράξεις οὐδέν· ἀργὸς ἡ θεός.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

Φοίβῳ μιγῆναί φησί τις φίλων ἐμῶν.

ΙΩΝ

Φοίβῳ γυνὴ γεγῶσα ; μὴ λέγ', ὦ ξένη.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

340 καὶ παῖδά γ' ἔτεκε τῷ θεῷ λάθρα πατρός.

ΙΩΝ

οὐκ ἔστιν· ἀνδρὸς ἀδικίαν αἰσχύνεται.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐ φησιν αὐτή· καὶ πέπονθεν ἄθλια.

ΙΩΝ

τί χρήμα δράσασ', εἰ θεῷ συνεζύγη ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τὸν παῖδ' ὃν ἔτεκεν ἐξέθηκε δωμάτων.

ΙΩΝ

ὁ δ' ἐκτεθεὶς παῖς ποῦ 'στιν ; εἰσορᾷ φάος ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐκ οἶδεν οὐδεὶς. ταῦτα καὶ μαντεύομαι.

ΙΩΝ

εἰ δ' οὐκέτ' ἔστι, τίνι τρόπῳ διεφθάρη ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

θῆρας σφε τὸν δύστηνον ἐλπίζει κτανεῖν.

ΙΩΝ

ποίῳ τόδ' ἔγνω χρωμένη τεκμηρίῳ ;

ION

ION

Speak it : myself will undertake for thee.

CREUSA

Hear then the story :—but ashamed am I.

ION

Shame shall not help thy strait,—a deedless Goddess!

CREUSA

She saith—my friend—that Phoebus humbled her.

ION

Phoebus !—a woman ! Stranger, say not so.

CREUSA

She bare the God's child, and her sire knew naught. 340

ION

Never !—a man's crime this, and hers the shame.

CREUSA

No !—herself saith. She hath suffered griefs beside.

ION

Suffered ?—for what sin wrought—this bride of
heaven ?

CREUSA

The son she bare she cast forth from her halls.

ION

Where is her cast-out child ? Doth he see light ?

CREUSA

None knows. For this I seek the oracle.

ION

But, if he be no more, how perished he ?

CREUSA

Wild beasts, she troweth, slew the hapless babe.

ION

And by what token knew she this had been ?

ΙΩΝ

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

350

ἐλθοῦς' ἵν' αὐτὸν ἐξέθῃς', οὐχ ἡῦρ' ἔτι.

ΙΩΝ

ἦν δὲ σταλαγμὸς ἐν στίβῳ τις αἵματος ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐ φησι· καίτοι πόλλ' ἐπεστράφη πέδον.

ΙΩΝ

χρόνος δὲ τίς τῷ παιδὶ διαπεπραγμένῳ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

σοὶ ταῦτ' ἦβης, εἶπερ ἦν, εἶχ' ἂν μέτρον.

ΙΩΝ

οὐκ οὖν ἔτ' ἄλλον ὕστερον τίκτει γόνον ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἀδικεῖ νιν ὁ θεός· οὐ τεκοῦσα δ' ἀθλία.

ΙΩΝ

τί δ', εἰ λάθρα νιν Φοῖβος ἐκτρέφει λαβών ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τὰ κοινὰ χαίρων οὐ δίκαια δρᾷ μόνος.

ΙΩΝ

οἴμοι· προσφδὸς ἢ τύχη τῷ μῶ πάθει.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

36.)

καὶ σ', ὦ ξέν', οἶμαι μητέρ' ἀθλίαν ποθεῖν.

ΙΩΝ

καὶ μή γ' ἐπ' οἰκτόν μ' ἔξαγ' οὐ λελήσμεθα.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

σιγῶ· πέραινε δ' ὦν σ' ἀνιστορῶ πέρι.

ΙΩΝ

οἶσθ' οὖν ὃ κάμνει τοῦ λόγου μάλιστά σοι ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τί δ' οὐκ ἐκείνη τῇ ταλαιπώρῳ νοσεῖ ;

ΙΩΝ

πῶς ὁ θεὸς ὃ λαθεῖν βούλεται μαντεύσεται ;

ION

CREUSA

She came where she had left him, and found not. 350

ION

And blood-gouts—were there any on the track?

CREUSA

Nay, saith she: yet she traversed oft the ground.

ION

How long the time since this child's taking-off?

CREUSA

Living, he had had the measure of thy years.

ION

And hath she borne no offspring after this?

CREUSA

Still the God wrongs her: childless grief is hers.

ION

What if in secret Phoebus fostereth him?

CREUSA

Unjust!—alone to enjoy what he should share.

ION

Ah me! her heart-strings are attuned to mine!

CREUSA

For thee yearns some sad mother too, I ween. 360

ION

Ah, wake not thou mine half-forgotten grief.

CREUSA

I am dumb: whereof I question thee, say on.

ION

Seest thou where lies the weakness of thy plea?

CREUSA

Ah, hapless one, wherein is she not weak!

ION

How should the God reveal that he would hide?

ΙΩΝ

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

εἵπερ καθίζει τρίποδα κοινὸν Ἑλλάδος.

ΙΩΝ

αἰσχύνεται τὸ πρᾶγμα· μὴ ἔξελεγχέ νιν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἀλγύνεται δέ γ' ἡ παθοῦσα τῇ τύχῃ.

ΙΩΝ

370 οὐκ ἔστιν ὅστις σοι προφητεύσει τάδε.
 ἐν τοῖς γὰρ αὐτοῦ δώμασιν κακὸς φανείς
 Φοῖβος δικαίως τὸν θεμιστεύοντά σοι
 δράσειεν ἂν τι πῆμ'· ἀπαλλάσσουν, γύναι·
 τῷ γὰρ θεῷ τάναντί' οὐ μαντευτέον.
 εἰς γὰρ τοσοῦτον ἀμαθίας ἔλθοιμεν ἂν,
 εἰ τοὺς θεοὺς ἄκοντας ἐκπονήσομεν
 φράζειν ἃ μὴ θέλουσιν ἢ προβωμίους
 σφαγαῖσι μήλων ἢ δι' οἰωνῶν πτεροῖς.
 ἂν γὰρ βία σπεύδωμεν ἀκόντων θεῶν,
 ἀνόνητα¹ κεκτῆμεσθα τὰγάθ', ὦ γύναι·
 380 ἃ δ' ἂν διδῶσ' ἐκόντες, ὠφελούμεθα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλαί γε πολλοῖς εἰσι συμφοραὶ βροτῶν,
 μορφαὶ δὲ διαφέρουσιν. ἐν δ' ἂν εὐτυχὲς
 μόλις ποτ' ἐξεύροι τις ἀνθρώπων βίη.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὦ Φοῖβε, κακεὶ κἀνθάδ' οὐ δίκαιος εἰ
 εἰς τὴν ἀποῦσαν, ἧς πάρειςιν οἱ λόγοι.
 σὺ δ' οὔτ' ἔσωσας τὸν σὸν δν σῶσαί σ' ἐχρήν,
 οὔθ' ἱστορούση μητρὶ μάντις ὦν ἐρεῖς,
 ὥς εἰ μὲν οὐκέτ' ἔστιν, ὀγκωθῇ τάφῳ,
 εἰ δ' ἔστιν, ἔλθῃ μητρὸς εἰς ὄψιν ποτέ.

¹ Stephens : for MSS. ἄκοντα,

ION

CREUSA

How not?—his is the nation's oracle.

ION

His shame the deed is. Question not of him.

CREUSA

O yea, the sufferer in her lot may pine!

ION

There's none will ask the God of this for thee.
For, in his own halls were he villain proved, 370
Vengeance on him who brought thee that response
Would Phoebus justly wreak. Ah lady, go :
We must not seek his shrine to flout the God.
For lo, what height of folly should we reach
If in the Gods' despite we wrest their will,
By sacrifice of sheep on altars, or
By flight of birds, to tell what they would veil.
Could we of force wring aught from Gods full loth,
Profitless blessings, lady, should we grasp ;
But what they give free-willed are boons indeed. 380

CHORUS

Strange chances many on many mortals fall,
And manifold their forms. Ye scarce shall find
One happy lot in all the life of men.

CREUSA

O Phoebus, there and here unjust art thou
Unto the absent one whose plea is here. .
Thou shouldst have saved thine own, yet didst not
save ;
Nor heeds the Seer the mother's questioning,
That, if her babe live not, his tomb may rise,
Or, if he live, that she may see his face.

390 ἄλλ' οὖν, ἔαν γὰρ χρή¹ τάδ', εἰ πρὸς τοῦ θεοῦ
 κωλυόμεσθα μὴ μαθεῖν ἃ βούλομαι.
 ἄλλ', ὦ ξέν', εἰσορῶ γὰρ εὐγενῇ πόσιν
 Ξοῦθον πέλας δὴ τόνδε, τὰς Τροφωνίου
 λιπόντα θαλάμας, τοὺς λελεγμένους λόγους
 σίγα πρὸς ἄνδρα, μὴ τιν' αἰσχύνῃν λάβω
 διακονοῦσα κρυπτά, καὶ προβῇ λόγος
 οὐχ ἥπερ ἡμεῖς αὐτὸν ἐξειλίσσομεν.
 τὰ γὰρ γυναικῶν δυσχερὴ πρὸς ἄρσενας,
 400 καὶ ταῖς κακαῖσιν ἀγαθαὶ μεμιγμένα
 μισοῦμεθ'. οὕτω δυστυχεῖς πεφύκαμεν.

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

πρῶτον μὲν ὁ θεὸς τῶν ἐμῶν προσφθεγμάτων
 λαβὼν ἀπαρχὰς χαιρέτω, σύ τ', ὦ γύναι.
 μῶν χρόνιος ἐλθὼν σ' ἐξέπληξ' ὀρρωδία ;

ΚΡΕΟΤΣΑ

οὐδέν γ' ἀφίκου δ' εἰς μέριμναν, ἀλλὰ μοι
 λέξον, τί θέσπισμ' ἐκ Τροφωνίου φέρεις,
 παίδων ὅπως νῶν σπέρμα συγκραθήσεται ;

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

οὐκ ἤξιωσε τοῦ θεοῦ προλαμβάνειν
 μαντεύμαθ'. ἐν δ' οὖν εἶπεν· οὐκ ἄπαιδά με
 πρὸς οἶκον ἤξειν οὐδὲ σ' ἐκ χρηστηρίων.

ΚΡΕΟΤΣΑ

410 ὦ πότνια Φοίβου μήτερ, εἰ γὰρ αἰσίως
 ἔλθοιμεν, ἃ τε νῶν συμβόλαια πρόσθεν ἦν
 ἐς παῖδα τὸν σόν, μεταπέσοι βελτίονα.

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

ἔσται τάδ'. ἀλλὰ τίς προφητεύει θεοῦ ;

¹ Reiske : for MSS, ἔαν χρή.

ION

Yet must I let this be, if by the God 390
I am barred from learning that which I desire.
But, stranger,—for I see my princely lord,
Xuthus, anigh us yonder, who hath left
Trophonius' crypt,—of this that we have said
Speak to my lord naught, lest I get me shame
For handling secrets, and the tale fall out
Not after our unravelling thereof.
For woman's lot as touching men is hard ;
And, since the good are with the bad confused,
Hated we are :—ill-starred we are from birth. 400
Enter XUTHUS.

XUTHUS

First, to the God the firstfruits of my greetings :
All hail to him, and hail to thee, my wife.
Hath my late-lingering thrilled thee with dismay ?

CREUSA

Nay, 'tis but care that meets thee. Tell to me
What answer from Trophonius bringest thou,
How we shall have joint issue, thou and I ?

XUTHUS

He took not on him to forestall the word
Of Phoebus. This he said—nor thou nor I
Childless shall wend home from the oracle.

CREUSA

Queen, Phoebus' mother, grant our home-return 410
Prosperous : all our dealings heretofore
Touching thy son, to happier issue fall !

XUTHUS

This shall be. Who is His interpreter ?

ΙΩΝ

ΙΩΝ

ἡμεῖς τά γ' ἔξω, τῶν ἔσω δ' ἄλλοις μέλει,
οἳ πλησίον θάσσουσι τρίποδος, ὧ ξένη,
Δελφῶν ἀριστῆς, οὓς ἐκλήρωσεν πάλος.

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

καλῶς· ἔχω δὴ πάνθ' ὅσων ἐχρήζομεν.
στείχοιμ' ἂν εἴσω· καὶ γάρ, ὡς ἐγὼ κλύω,
χρηστήριον πέπτωκε τοῖς ἐπήλυσι
420 κοινὸν πρὸ ναοῦ· βούλομαι δ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ
τῇδ', αἰσία γάρ, θεοῦ λαβεῖν μαντεύματα.
σὺ δ' ἀμφὶ βωμούς, ὦ γύναι, δαφνηφόρους
λαβοῦσα κλῶνας, εὐτέκνους εὖχου θεοῖς
χρησμούς μ' ἐνεγκεῖν ἐξ Ἀπόλλωνος δόμων.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἔσται τάδ', ἔσται. Λοξίας δ' εἰς θέλῃ
νῦν ἀλλὰ τὰς πρὶν ἀναλαβεῖν ἀμαρτίας,
ἅπας μὲν οὐ γένοιτ' ἂν εἰς ἡμᾶς φίλος,
ὅσον δὲ χρήζει, θεὸς γάρ ἐστι, δέξομαι.

ΙΩΝ

τί ποτε λόγοισιν ἡ ξένη πρὸς τὸν θεὸν
430 κρυπτοῖσιν αἰεὶ λοιδοροῦσ' αἰνίσσεται,
ἥτοι φιλοῦσά γ' ἥς ὑπερμαντεύεται,
ἥ καὶ τι σιγῶσ' ὧν σιωπᾶσθαι χρεῶν ;
ἀτὰρ θυγατρὸς τῆς Ἑρεχθέως τί μοι
μέλει ; προσήκει γ' οὐδέν. ἀλλὰ χρυσέαις
πρόχοισιν ἐλθὼν εἰς ἀπορραντήρια
δρόσον καθήσω. νουθετητέος δέ μοι
Φοῖβος, τί πάσχει· παρθένους βία γαμῶν
προδίδωσι, παῖδας ἐκτεκνούμενος λάθρα
θνήσκοντας ἀμελεῖ. μὴ σύ γ'· ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ κρατεῖς,
440 ἀρετὰς δίωκε. καὶ γὰρ ὅστις ἂν βροτῶν
κακὸς πεφύκη, ζημιούσιν οἱ θεοί.

ION

ION

Without, I ; others for the things within,
Stranger, which nigh unto the tripod sit,
The Delphian lords, in order of their lot.

XUTHUS

'Tis well : now know I all I sought to know.
I will pass in ; for, as I hear it told,
Before the temple hath been slain for strangers
A general victim. I would fain this day— 420
This day fair-omened—gain the God's response.
Thou to the bay-crowned altars bear the boughs,
My wife, and pray the Gods that I may win
Promise of fair sons from Apollo's fane.

CREUSA

Yea, this shall be. [*Exit XUTHUS to inner Temple.*

If Loxias consent

Now at the last to atone for olden wrongs,
Not wholly will he show himself my friend,
Yet, since he is God, whate'er he grants I take.
[*Exit.*

ION

Why doth this stranger rail upon the God
In riddles of dark sayings evermore ? 430
For love of her for whom she seeks the shrine ?
Or keeping back a thing she must not speak ?
Yet with Erechtheus' daughter what have I
To do ? She is naught to me. But I will go
Unto the lavers, with the golden ewers
To pour in water-dews. Yet must I plead
With Phoebus—what ails him ? He ravisheth
Maids, and forsakes ; begetteth babes by stealth,
And heeds not, though they die. Do thou not so !
Being strong, be righteous. For what man soe'er 440
Transgresseth, the Gods visit this on him.

ΙΩΝ

πῶς οὖν δίκαιον τοὺς νόμους ὑμᾶς βροτοῖς
 γράψαντας αὐτοὺς ἀνομίαν ὀφλισκάνειν ;
 εἰ δ'—οὐ γὰρ ἔσται, τῷ λόγῳ δὲ χρήσομαι—
 δίκας βιαίων δώσεται ἄνθρώποις γάμων,
 σὺ καὶ Ποσειδῶν Ζεὺς θ' ὃς οὐρανοῦ κρατεῖ,
 ναοὺς τίνοντες ἀδικίας κενώσετε.
 τὰς ἡδονὰς γὰρ τῆς προμηθείας πάρος
 σπεύδοντες ἀδικεῖτ'. οὐκέτ' ἄνθρωπους κακοὺς
 450 λέγειν δίκαιον, εἰ τὰ τῶν θεῶν καλὰ
 μιμούμεθ', ἀλλὰ τοὺς διδάσκοντας τάδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

	σὲ τὰν ὠδίνων λοχιᾶν ἀνελείθυιαν, ἐμᾶν Ἄθάναν ἱκετεύω, Προμηθεῖ Τιτᾶνι λοχευ- θείσαν κατ' ἀκροτάτας κορυφὰς Διός, ὦ μάκαιρα Νίκα, μόλε Πύθιον οἶκον, Ὀλύμπου χρυσέων θαλάμων 460 πταμένα πρὸς ἀγυιάς, Φοιβήιος ἔνθα γὰς μεσσομφαλὸς ἐστία παρὰ χορευομένῳ τρίποδι μαντεύματα κραίνει, σὺ καὶ παῖς ἅ Λατογενής, δύο θεαὶ δύο παρθένοι, κασίγνηται σεμναὶ τοῦ Φοίβου. ἱκετεύσατε δ', ὦ κόραι, τὸ παλαιὸν Ἑρεχθέως	στρ.
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ION

How were it just then that ye should enact
 For men laws, and yourselves work lawlessness?
 For if—it could not be, yet put it so —
 Ye should pay mulct. to men for lawless lust,¹
 Thou, the Sea-king, and Zeus the Lord of Heaven,
 Paying for wrongs should make your temples void.
 For, following pleasure past all wisdom's bounds,
 Ye work unrighteousness. Unjust it were
 To call men vile, if we but imitate 450
 What Gods deem good :—they are vile who teach us
 this. [Exit.

CHORUS

My Queen, at whose birth-tide was given (Str.)
 Of the Lady of Travail-pang
 No help, hear, Pallas, my prayer,
 Whom the crown of a God's head bare
 By Prometheus the Titan riven
 When the Daughter of Zeus forth sprang ;
 Come, Victory-queen, to the dwelling
 Pythian, speeding thy wing
 From Olympus' chambers of gold
 To the streets that the World's Heart hold, 460
 Where the bodings of Phoebus are told,—
 Yea, brought to pass in the telling,—
 At the tripod that dances enring.

Draw nigh at mine invocation,
 Thou and Artemis, Virgins twain,
 Phoebus's sisters divine,
 Join your intercessions with mine,
 That Erechtheus' ancient line

¹ The fine for violence to a virgin was, by Solon's laws, a thousand drachmas.

ΙΩΝ

470

γένος εὐτεκνίας χρονίου καθαροῖς
μαντεύμασι κῦρσαι.

ὑπερβαλλούσας γὰρ ἔχει ἀντ.

θνατοῖς εὐδαιμονίας
ἀκίνητον ἀφορμάν,
τέκνων οἷς ἂν καρποτρόφοι
λάμπωσιν ἐν θαλάμοις
πυτρίοισι νεάνιδες ἦβαι,
διαδέκτορα πλούτου
ὥς ἔξουντες ἐκ πατέρων
ἐτέροις ἐπὶ τέκνοις.

480

ἀλλὰ τε γὰρ ἐν κακοῖς
σύν τ' εὐτυχίαις φίλον,
δορί τε γὰρ πατρία φέρει
σωτήριον αἶγλαν.¹
ἐμοὶ μὲν πλούτου τε πάρος
βασιλικῶν τ' εἰεν θαλάμων
τροφαὶ κήδειοι κενῶν γε τέκνων.
τὸν ἄπαιδα δ' ἀποστνγῶ
βίον, ᾧ τε δοκεῖ ψέγω·
μετὰ δὲ κτεάνων μετρίων βιοτᾶς
εὐπαιδος ἐχοίμαν.

490

ὦ Πανὸς θακήματα καὶ ἐπωδ.
παραυλίζουσα πέτρα
μυχώδεσι Μακραῖς,
ἵνα χοροὺς στείβουσι ποδοῖν
Ἀγραύλου κόραι τρίγονοι
στάδια χλοερά πρό Παλλάδος

¹ Herwerden : for MSS. ἀλλὰν.

ION

Through the light of a clear revelation 470
 Fair offspring at last may attain.

'Tis a treasure whose seals are unbroken, (*Ant.*)

'Tis a joy that surpasseth the lot
 Of the many, when stalwart and tall
 Shines fair in a father's hall

The presence of sons, to betoken
 A line that shall perish not ;

Sons, that, when death bringeth severance,
 Shall receive to pass on to their seed
 The wealth that their sires' hands hold : 480
 Yea, by these be our sorrows consoled,
 And a joy within joy they enfold,
 And their spear flasheth light of deliverance
 In the hour of the fatherland's need.

Ah, far above golden treasure

Or than princely halls do I praise

Dear children to cherish—mine own !

Mine horror were life all lone :

Who loveth it, wit hath he none :

But give to me substance in measure, 490

And children to brighten my days !

O haunts of Pan's abiding, (*Epode*)

O sentinel rock down-gazing

On the Long-cliff caves dim-glimmering,
 Where, with shadowy feet in the dance soft-sliding,

Agraulus' daughters three go pacing

O'er the lawns by Athena's fane dew-shim-
 mering

•

ΙΩΝ

ναῶν, συρίγγων
 ὑπ' αἰόλας ἰαχᾶς
 500 ὕμνων, ὅτ' ἀναλίοις
 συρίζεις, ὦ Πάν,
 τοῖσι σοῖς ἐν ἄντροις,
 ἵνα τεκοῦσά τις
 παρθένος, ὦ μελέα, βρέφος
 Φοῖβῳ, πτανοῖς ἐξώρισε θοῖναν
 θηρσί τε φοινίαν δαῖτα, πικρῶν γάμων
 ὕβριν. οὐτ' ἐπὶ κερκίσιν οὔτε λόγοις
 φάτιν ἄιον εὐτυχίας μετέχειν
 θεόθεν τέκνα θνατοῖς.

ΙΩΝ

510 πρόσπολοι γυναῖκες, αἰὲ τῶνδ' ἀμφὶ κρηπῖδας
 δόμων
 θυοδόκων φρούρημ' ἔχουσαι δεσπότην φυλάσσετε,
 ἐκλέλοιπ' ἤδη τὸν ἱερὸν τρίποδα καὶ χρηστήριον
 Ξοῦθος, ἧ μίμνει κατ' οἶκον ἱστορῶν ἀπαιδίαν ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐν δόμοις ἔστ', ὦ ξέν'. οὐπω δῶμ' ὑπερβαίνει
 τόδε.
 ὥς δ' ἐπ' ἐξόδοισιν ὄντος τῶνδ' ἀκούομεν πυλῶν
 δοῦπον, ἐξιόντα τ' ἤδη δεσπότην ὄραν πάρα.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ὦ τέκνον, χαῖρ'· ἡ γὰρ ἀρχὴ τοῦ λόγου πρέπουσά
 μοι.

ΙΩΝ

χαίρομεν· σὺ δ' εὖ φρόνει γε, καὶ δὴ ὄντ' εὖ
 πράξομεν.

ION

In moonlight, while upward floats
 A weird strain rising and falling,
 Wild witchery-wafting notes, 500
 O Pan, from thy pipes that are calling
 Out of thy sunless grotts!¹

Ah, a maid-mother there most woe-forlorn
 Cast Phoebus's child for a banquet gory—
 Bitter outrage's fruit!—by the birds to be torn
 And the beasts. Nor in woven web nor in story
 Ever heard I of happiness blent with the glory
 Of Gods' seed woman-born.

Enter ION.

ION

Bower-maidens, ye which keeping watch the altar- 510
 steps beside [forth abide,
 Of the incense-clouded fane, your master's coming-
 Say, hath Xuthus left by this the holy tripod and
 the shrine, [childless line?
 Or within yet lingering asks he touching that long-

CHORUS

In the temple is he, stranger, treads not yet the
 threshold-stone.
 List, a sound at yonder portal—through the porch-
 way passeth one:— [for eyes to see.
 Lo, where now he cometh forth—our master, plain
Enter XUTHUS: *attempts to embrace* ION.

XUTHUS

Joy to thee, son!—fitting prelude this is of my
 speech to thee.

ION

Joy is mine: but thou, control thee; then were twain
 in happy case.

¹ The daughters of Agraulus (cf. ll. 22–24, 271–4) haunted after death the scene of their suicide.

ΙΩΝ

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

δὸς χερὸς φίλημά μοι σῆς σώματός τ' ἀμφιπ-
τυχάς.

ΙΩΝ

520 εὖ φρονεῖς μέν ; ἢ σ' ἔμηνε θεοῦ τις, ὦ ξένε,
βλάβη ;

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

σωφρονῶ, τὰ φίλταθ' εὐρὼν εἰ φιλεῖν ἐφίεμαι.

ΙΩΝ

παῦε· μὴ ψαύσας τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ στέμματα ῥήξης
χερί.

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

ἄψομαι· κοῦ ῥυσιάζω, τὰμὰ δ' εὐρίσκω φίλα.

ΙΩΝ

οὐκ ἀπαλλάξει, πρὶν εἴσω τόξα πλευμόνων λαβεῖν ;

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

ὥς τί δὴ φεύγεις με σαντοῦ γνωρίσας τὰ φίλτατα ;

ΙΩΝ

οὐ φιλῶ φρενοῦν ἀμούσους καὶ μεμνηότας ξένους.

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

κτεῖνε καὶ πῖμπρη· πατρὸς γάρ, ἣν κτάνης, ἔσει
φονεύς.

ΙΩΝ

ποῦ δέ μοι πατὴρ σύ ; ταῦτ' οὖν οὐ γέλως κλύειν
ἐμοί ;

ION

XUTHUS

Let me kiss thine hand, and let me fold thy form in mine embrace !

ION

Stranger, hast thy wits?—or is thy mind distraught by stroke of heaven ?

520

XUTHUS

Right my wit is, if I long to kiss my best-beloved regiven.

ION

Hold—~~hands off!~~—the temple-garlands of Aeneas won not thou !

XUTHUS

Clasp thee will I !—no man-stealer ; but I find my darling now.

ION (*starting back, and fitting an arrow to his bow*).

Wilt not hence, or ever thou receive my shaft thy ribs within ?

XUTHUS

Wherefore dost thou flee, ~~me,~~ who hast learnt to know thy nearest kin ?

ION

Naught I love to admonish aliens mannerless and sense-bereft.

XUTHUS

Slay¹—then burn me ;¹ for a father's heart thine arrow shall have cleft.

ION

Thou my father ! Is not this a laughter-scoff for me to hear ?

¹ It being the sacred duty of the son to lay the father's corpse upon the pyre.

ΙΩΝ

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

οὐ· τρέχων ὁ μῦθος ἄν σοι τὰ μὰ σημήνειεν ἄν.

ΙΩΝ

καὶ τί μοι λέξεις ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

530

πατὴρ σός εἰμι καὶ σὺ παῖς ἐμός.

ΙΩΝ

τίς λέγει τάδ' ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ὃς σ' ἔθρεψεν ὄντα Λοξίας ἐμόν.

ΙΩΝ

μαρτυρεῖς σαυτῷ.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ γ' ἐκμαθὼν χρηστηρία.

ΙΩΝ

ἐσφάλης αἰνιγμ' ἀκούσας.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

οὐκ ἄρ' ὄρθ' ἀκούομεν.

ΙΩΝ

ὁ δὲ λόγος τίς ἐστὶ Φοίβου ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

τὸν συναντήσαντά μοι—

ΙΩΝ

τῶν συνάντησιν ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

δόμων τῶνδ' ἐξιόντι τοῦ θεοῦ—⁹

ΙΩΝ

συμφορᾶς τίνος κυρῆσαι ;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

παῖδ' ἐμὸν πεφυκέναι.

ΙΩΝ

σὸν γεγῶτ', ἢ δῶρον ἄλλων ;

ION

XUTHUS

Nay, the eager-hurrying word shall show thee all my meaning clear.

ION

Ay, and what wilt tell ?

XUTHUS

Thy father am I, and thou art my son. 530

ION

Who the voucher ?

XUTHUS

Loxias, who reared the child that I have won.

ION

Thou art thine own witness.

XUTHUS

Nay, the God's own oracle I heard.

ION.

Heardest riddles and misreadest.

XUTHUS

Then mine ears can hear no word.

ION

What was this, the word of Phoebus ?

XUTHUS

That the man who met my face—

ION

Met thee—met thee ?

XUTHUS

As I came from out Apollo's holy place—

ION

Ay, and what should be his fate ?

XUTHUS

My true-begotten son is this.

ION

Born thy son, or given of others ?

ΙΩΝ

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

δῶρον, ὄντα δ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ.

ΙΩΝ

πρῶτα δῆτ' ἐμοὶ ξυνάπτεις πόδα σόν ;

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

οὐκ ἄλλω, τέκνον.

ΙΩΝ

ἢ τύχη πόθεν ποθ' ἦκει ;

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

δύο μίαν θαυμάζομεν.

ΙΩΝ

ἔα. τίνος δέ σοι πεφυκα μητρός ;

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

540

οὐκ ἔχω φράσαι.

ΙΩΝ

οὐδὲ Φοῖβος εἶπε ;

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

τερφθεὶς τοῦτο, κεῖν' οὐκ ἠρόμην.

ΙΩΝ

γῆς ἄρ' ἐκπέφυκα μητρός ;

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

οὐ πέδον τίκει τέκνα.

ΙΩΝ

πῶς ἂν οὖν εἶην σός ;

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδ', ἀναφέρω δ' εἰς τὸν θεόν.

ΙΩΝ

φέρε λόγων ἀψώμεθ' ἄλλων.

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

ταῦτ' ἄμεινον, ὦ τέκνον.

ΙΩΝ

ἦλθες εἰς νόθον τι λέκτρον ;

56

ION

XUTHUS

Given—and born from me he is.

ION

So on me thy foot first stumbled ?

XUTHUS

Yea, my son, on none beside.

ION

Ay, and whence this happy chance ?

XUTHUS

We marvel both it should betide.

ION

Ha, what mother bare me to thee ?

XUTHUS

Sooth, thereof can I say naught. 540

ION

Neither Phoebus told ?

XUTHUS

For joy of this thing, that I never sought.

ION

Ah, a child of mother Earth !

XUTHUS

Nay, children spring not from the sod.

ION

How then thine am I ?

XUTHUS

I know not: I refer it to the God.

ION

Come, to reasonings rather turn we.

XUTHUS

Better so, my son, in sooth.

ION

Hadst thou ever part in lawless love ?

ΙΩΝ

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

μωρία γε τοῦ νέου.

ΙΩΝ

πρὶν κόρην λαβεῖν Ἐρεχθέως ;

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

οὐ γὰρ ὕστερόν γε πω.

ΙΩΝ

ἄρα δῆτ' ἐκεῖ μ' ἔφυσας ;

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

τῷ χρόνῳ γε συντρέχει.

ΙΩΝ

καῖτα πῶς ἀφικόμεσθα δεῦρο,

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

ταῦτ' ἀμηχανῶ.

ΙΩΝ

διὰ μακρᾶς ἐλθὼν κελεύθου ;

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

τοῦτο καὶ μ' ἀπαιολᾷ.

ΙΩΝ

Πυθίαν δ' ἦλθες πέτραν πρὶν ;

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

550 εἰς φανὰς γε Βακχίου.

ΙΩΝ

προξένων δ' ἔν του κατέσχες ;

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

ὅς με Δελφίσιν κόραις —

ΙΩΝ

ἐθιάσευσ', ἢ πῶς τάδ' αὐδᾶς ;

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

Μαινάσιν γε Βακχίου.

ΙΩΝ

ἔμφρον' ἢ κάτουνον ὄντα ;

ION

XUTHUS

Mid follies of my youth.

ION

Ere Erechtheus' daughter wed thee?

XUTHUS

Since, to her have I been true.

ION

Haply then didst thou beget me?

XUTHUS

Time is consonant thereto.

ION

Were it so, how came I hither?

XUTHUS

Nay, I cannot fathom it.

ION

Long the journey for a babe!

XUTHUS

This too o'erpasseth all my wit.

ION

Hast thou seen ere this the Pythian Rock?

XUTHUS

At Bacchus' festal rite. 550

ION

Lodging with a Public Host?

XUTHUS

Yea; and with Delphian girls by night—

ION

Made initiate—this thy meaning?

XUTHUS

They were maidens Bacchanal.

ION

Sober, or of wine o'ercome?

ΙΩΝ

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

Βακχίου πρὸς ἡδοναῖς.

ΙΩΝ

τοῦτ' ἐκεῖν' ἔν' ἐσπάρημεν.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ὁ πότμος ἐξηῦρεν, τέκνον.

ΙΩΝ

πῶς δ' ἀφικόμεσθα ναούς;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ἔκβολον κόρης ἴσως.

ΙΩΝ

ἐκπεφεύγαμεν τὸ δούλον.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

πατέρα νυν δέχου, τέκνον.

ΙΩΝ

τῷ θεῷ γοῦν οὐκ ἀπιστεῖν εἰκός.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

εὖ φρονεῖς ἄρα.

ΙΩΝ

καὶ τί βουλόμεσθά γ' ἄλλο—

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

νῦν ὁρᾶς ἂν χρή σ' ὁρᾶν.

ΙΩΝ

ἦ Διὸς παιδὸς γενέσθαι παῖς;

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

ὃ σοί γε γίγνεται.

ΙΩΝ

ἦ θίγω δῆθ' οἷ μ' ἔφυσαν;

ION

XUTHUS
Of Bacchus' joys did this befall.

ION
This is my begetting's story !

XUTHUS
Fate, my son, hath found it out.

ION
Yet, how came I to the fane ?

XUTHUS
The maiden cast thee forth, I doubt.

ION
So, I 'scape the taint of serfdom.¹

XUTHUS
Son, thy father now receive.

ION
'Tis the God : I may not doubt him.

XUTHUS
Yea, 'tis wisdom to believe.

ION
What thing higher can I wish for—

XUTHUS
Now thou seest clear and true

ION
Than the fatherhood of Zeus ?

XUTHUS
O yea, by birth is this thy due.²

ION
Shall I clasp him, my begetter ?

¹ Only free-born Delphian women could take part in the
"Orgies."

² Xuthus being descended from Zeus.

ΙΩΝ

560

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

πιθόμενός γε τῷ θεῷ.

ΙΩΝ

χαῖρέ μοι, πάτερ,

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

φίλον γε φθέγμ' ἔδεξάμην τόδε.

ΙΩΝ

ἡμέρα θ' ἡ νῦν παρούσα.

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

μακάριόν γ' ἔθικέ με.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ φίλη μήτηρ, πότ' ἄρα καὶ σὸν ὄψομαι δέμας ;
νῦν ποθῶ σε μάλλον ἢ πρὶν ἥτις εἰ ποτ' εἰσιδεῖν.
ἀλλ' ἴσως τέθνηκας, ἡμεῖς δ' οὐδὲν ἂν δυναίμεθα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κοινὰ μὲν ἡμῖν δωμάτων εὐπραξίαι
ὅμως δὲ καὶ δέσποιναν εἰς τέκν' εὐτυχεῖν
ἐβουλόμην ἂν τοὺς τ' Ἑρεχθέως δόμους.

ΞΟΤΘΟΣ

ὦ τέκνον, εἰς μὲν σὴν ἀνεύρεσιν θεὸς
570 ὀρθῶς ἔκρανε, καὶ συνῆψ' ἐμοί τε σέ,
σύ τ' αὖ τὰ φίλταθ' ἠὔρες οὐκ εἰδὼς πάρος.
ὃ δ' ἦξας ὀρθῶς, τοῦτο καὶ ἔχει πόθος,
ὅπως σύ τ', ὦ παῖ, μητέρ' εὐρήσεις σέθεν,
ἐγὼ θ' ὅποίας μοι γυναικὸς ἐξέφυς.
χρόνῳ δὲ δόντες ταῦτ' ἴσως εὖροιμεν ἂν.
ἀλλ' ἐκλιπὼν θεοῦ δάπεδ' ἀλητείαν τε σὴν
εἰς τὰς Ἀθήνας στείχε κοινόφρων πατρί,
οὐ σ' ὄλβιον μὲν σκήπτρον ἀναμένει πατρός,
πολὺς δὲ πλούτος· οὐδὲ θάτερον νοσῶν
580 δυοῖν κεκλήσει δυσγενὴς πένης θ' ἄμα,
ἀλλ' εὐγενὴς τε καὶ πολυκτῆμων βίου.

ION

XUTHUS

If with Phoebus thou comply. 560

ION

Hail to thee, my father !

XUTHUS

Joyfully I welcome this thy cry.

ION

Hail the day that sees our meeting !

XUTHUS

Happy man it maketh me.

ION

Ah, belovèd mother, when thy visage also shall I see ?
More than ever now I long to see thee, who thou
be soe'er. [should be my prayer.

Ah, but thou perchance art dead, and all in vain

CHORUS

Ours too the house's happy fortune is :
Yet fain were I our queen were also blest
With offspring, and Erechtheus' ancient line.

XUTHUS

My son, as touching thy discovery
The God spake sooth, and so joined thee and me. 570
Thou hast found thy dearest, erst to thee unknown.
For thy just yearning, this is also mine,
That thou mayst find thy mother, O my son,
And I, the woman of whose womb thou art.
This shall we find forth haply, left to time.
Now, leave the God's floor, and thine homeless state :
To Athens come, with thine heart even as mine.
There waiteth thee thy father's sceptred bliss,
And much wealth. None shall cast into thy teeth
One of these taunts, base birth or poverty. 580
High-born art thou, a mighty man of wealth.

ΙΩΝ

σιγᾶς; τί πρὸς γῆν ὄμμα σὸν βαλὼν ἔχεις
εἰς φροντίδας τ' ἀπήλθες, ἐκ δὲ χαρμονῆς
πάλιν μεταστὰς δεῖμα προσβάλλεις πατρί;

ΙΩΝ

οὐ ταῦτ' οὖν εἶδος φαίνεται τῶν πραγμάτων
πρόσωθεν ὄντων ἐγγύθεν θ' ὁρωμένων.
ἐγὼ δὲ τὴν μὲν συμφορὰν ἀσπάζομαι,
πατέρα σ' ἀνευρών· ὦν δὲ γιγνώσκω πέρι
ἄκουσον. εἶναί φασι τὰς αὐτόχθονας
590 κλεινὰς Ἀθήνας οὐκ ἐπέισακτον γένος,
ἵν' εἰσπεσοῦμαι δύο νόσω κεκτημένος,
πατρός τ' ἐπακτοῦ καὐτὸς ὦν νοθαγενής.
καὶ τοῦτ' ἔχων τοῦνιδος, ἀσθενὴς μὲν ὦν,
[ὁ μὴδὲν ὦν καξ']¹ οὐδένων κεκλήσομαι·
ἦν δ' εἰς τὸ πρῶτον πόλεος ὀρμηθεὶς ζυγὸν
ζητῶ τις εἶναι, τῶν μὲν ἀδυνάτων ὑπο
μνησόμεσθα· λυπρὰ γὰρ τὰ κρείσσονα·
ὅσοι δὲ χρηστοὶ δυνάμενοί τ' εἶναι σοφοὶ
600 σιγῶσι καὶ σπεύδουσιν εἰς τὰ πράγματα,
γέλῳτ' ἐν αὐτοῖς μωρίαν τε λήψομαι
οὐχ ἡσυχάζων ἐν πόλει ψόγου πλέα.
τῶν δ' αὖ δοκούντων² χρωμένων τε τῇ πόλει
εἰς ἀξίωμα βὰς πλέον φρουρήσομαι
ψήφοισιν· οὕτω γὰρ τὰδ', ὦ πάτερ, φιλεῖ·
οἱ τὰς πόλεις ἔχοντες ἀξιώματα
τοῖς ἀνθαμίλλοις εἰσὶ πολεμιώτατοι.
ἐλθὼν δ' ἐς οἶκον ἀλλότριον ἔπηλυσ ὦν
γυναικὰ θ' ὥς ἄτεκνον, ἣ κοινουμένη
τὰς συμφοράς σοι πρόσθεν, ἀπολαχοῦσα νῦν
610 αὐτὴ καθ' αὐτὴν τὴν τύχην οἴσει πικρῶς,

¹ Scaliger and Valckenaer: lacuna in MSS.

² Wecklein: for MSS. λογίων

ION

Silent?—Now wherefore earthward droops thine eye,
And thou art deep in thought, and from thy joy
Art changed, and strikest dread into thy sire?

ION

The face of things appeareth not the same
Far off, and when we scan them nigh at hand.
So do I greet with gladness this my lot
Who find a sire : howbeit hear what burden
Weighs on my soul. The glorious earth-born state,
Athens, men say, hath naught of alien strain. 590
I shall thrust in, stained with a twofold taint—
An outland father, and my bastard self.
And, bearing this reproach, nor strong in friends,
“Nobody” shall be called—“Nobody’s Son.”
Then, if I press to Athens’ highest ranks,
And seek a name, of dullards shall I win
Hatred ; for jealousy ever dogs success.
Good men, whose wisdom well could helm the state,
Who yet hang back, who never speak in public,
To them shall I be laughing-stock and fool,
Who, in a town censorious, go not softly. 600
And statesmen who have made their mark, mid
whom
I seek repute, will hedge me in, and check
By the assembly’s votes. ’Tis ever so ;
They which sway nations, and have won repute,
To young ambitions are the bitterest foes.

Then, coming to a strange house, alien I,
And to a childless lady, who hath shared
With thee her sorrow heretofore, but now
Shall bear in bitterness her reproach alone, 610

πῶς δ' οὐχ ὑπ' αὐτῆς εἰκότως μισήσομαι,
 ὅταν παραστῶ σοὶ μὲν ἐγγύθεν ποδός,
 ἢ δ' οὐς' ἄτεκνος τὰ σὰ φίλ' εἰσορᾷ πικρῶς ;
 κατ' ἢ προδοὺς σύ μ' ἐς δάμαρτα σὴν βλέπης,
 ἢ τὰμὰ τιμῶν δῶμα συγχέας ἔχης ;
 ὅσας σφαγὰς δὴ φαρμάκων τε θανασίμων
 γυναῖκες εὖρον ἀνδράσιν διαφθοράς.
 ἄλλως τε τὴν σὴν ἄλοχον οἰκτείρω, πάτερ,
 ἄπαιδα γηράσκουσιν· οὐ γὰρ ἀξία
 620 πατέρων ἀπ' ἐσθλῶν οὐς' ἀπαιδίᾳ νοσεῖν.
 τυραννίδος δὲ τῆς μάτην αἰνουμένης
 τὸ μὲν πρόσωπον ἡδύ, τὰν δόμοισι δὲ
 λυπηρά· τίς γὰρ μακάριος, τίς εὐτυχής,
 ὅστις δεδοικῶς καὶ παραβλέπων βίου
 αἰῶνα τείνει ; δημότης ἂν εὐτυχής
 ζῇν ἂν θέλοιμι μᾶλλον ἢ τύραννος ὢν,
 ᾧ τοὺς πονηροὺς ἡδονὴ φίλους ἔχειν,
 ἐσθλοὺς δὲ μισεῖ κατθανεῖν φοβούμενος.
 εἴποις ἂν ὡς ὁ χρυσὸς ἐκνικᾷ τάδε·
 630 πλουτεῖν τε τερπνόν· οὐ φιλῶ ψόγους κλύειν
 ἐν χερσὶ σφύζων ὄλβον οὐδ' ἔχειν πόνους·
 εἴη δ' ἔμοιγε μέτρια μὴ λυπουμένῳ.
 ἂ δ' ἐνθάδ' εἶχον ἀγάθ' ἄκουσόν μου, πάτερ·
 τὴν φιλτάτην μὲν πρῶτον ἀνθρώποις σχολήν,
 ὄχλον τε μέτριον, οὐδέ μ' ἐξέπληξ' ὁδοῦ
 πονηρὸς οὐδεῖς· κείνο δ' οὐκ ἀνασχετόν,
 εἴκειν ὁδοῦ χαλῶντα τοῖς κακίοσιν.
 θεῶν δ' ἐν εὐχαῖς ἢ λόγοισιν ἢ βροτῶν,
 ὑπηρετῶν χαίρουσιν, οὐ γοωμένοις.
 640 καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἐξέπεμπον, οἱ δ' ἦκον ξένοι,
 ὥσθ' ἡδὺς αἰὲ καίνος ὢν καινοῖσιν ἦ.
 ὃ δ' εὐκτὸν ἀνθρώποισι, κἂν ἄκουσιν ἦ,

ION

How shall I not, with reason, have her hate,
When by thy knee I stand, she on thy love
Looketh with bitter eyes of childlessness,—
When thou must cast me off and cleave to her,
Or honour me, and wreck thine household's peace?
How oft the dagger and the deadly bowl
Have women found to slay their lords withal!
Nay, father, more—I pity this thy wife
Who grows grey childless. 'Tis not worthy her,
Sprung from proud sires—this curse of childlessness. 620

And sovranty, so oft, so falsely praised,
Winsome its face is, but behind the veil
Is torment. Who is happy, fortunate who,
That, fearing violence, glancing aye askance,
Weareth out life? Nay, rather would I live
Happy-obscure, than be exalted prince,—
One who must joy to have for friends the vile,
Who hates the good, and ever dreads to die.
“Ah,” thou wilt say, “gold overbears all this,
And wealth is sweet.” Would I clutch lucre—
groan 630

Under its load, with curses in mine ears?
Nay, wealth for me in measure, sorrowless.

But, father, hear what blessings here were mine:—
First, leisure, dearest of delights to men:
Friendly the folk; no villain jostleth me
Out of the path: it galls the very soul
To yield the pass, and vail to baser men.
My life was prayer to Gods, converse with men,
Ministrant unto joy and not to grief,
Welcoming coming, speeding parting guests, 640
A new face smiling still on faces new.
And that which men, though loth, must ask in prayer,

ΙΩΝ

δίκαιον εἶναί μ' ὁ νόμος ἢ φύσις θ' ἅμα
 παρεῖχε τῷ θεῷ. ταῦτα συννοούμενος
 κρείσσω νομίζω τὰνθάδ' ἢ τὰ κεῖ, πάτερ.
 ἔα δ' ἐμαυτῷ ζῆν· ἴση γὰρ ἢ χάρις,
 μέγαλοισι χαίρειν σμικρά θ' ἡδέως ἔχειν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καλῶς ἔλεξας, εἶπερ οὖς ἐγὼ φιλῶ
 ἐν τοίοισι σοῖσιν εὐτυχήσουσιν λόγοις.

ΞΟΥΘΟΣ

- 650 παῦσαι λόγων τῶνδ', εὐτυχεῖν δ' ἐπίστασο·
 θέλω γὰρ οὐπὲρ σ' ἠῦρον ἄρξασθαι, τέκνον,
 κοινῆς τραπέζης δαῖτα πρὸς κοινὴν πεσών,
 θῦσαί θ' ἃ σου πρὶν γενέθλι' οὐκ ἐθύσαμεν.
 καὶ νῦν μὲν ὥς δὴ ξένον ἄγων σ' ἐφέστιον
 δεῖπνοισι τέρψω· τῆς δ' Ἀθηναίων χθονὸς
 ἄξω θεατὴν δῆθεν, ὥς οὐκ ὄντ' ἐμόν.
 καὶ γὰρ γυναῖκα τὴν ἐμὴν οὐ βούλομαι
 λυπεῖν ἄτεκνον οὔσαν αὐτὸς εὐτυχῶν.
 660 χρόνῳ δὲ καιρὸν λαμβάνων προσάξομαι
 δάμαρτ' ἐὰν σε σκῆπτρα τᾶμ' ἔχειν χθονός.
 Ἴωνα δ' ὀνομάζω σε τῇ τύχῃ πρέπον,
 ὀθούνεκ' ἀδύτων ἐξιόντι μοι θεοῦ
 ἶχνος συνῆψας πρῶτος. ἀλλὰ τῶν φίλων
 πλήρωμ' ἀθροίσας βουθύτῳ σὺν ἡδονῇ
 πρόσσειπε, μέλλων Δελφίδ' ἐκλιπεῖν πόλιν.
 ὑμῖν δὲ σιγᾶν, δμῳίδες, λέγω τάδε,
 ἢ θάνατον εἰπούσαισι πρὸς δάμαρτ' ἐμὴν.

ΙΩΝ

- στείχοιμ' ἄν· ἐν δὲ τῆς τύχης ἄπεστί μοι·
 εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἦτις μ' ἔτεκεν εὐρήσω, πάτερ,
 670 ἀβίωτον ἡμῖν· εἰ δ' ἐπεύξασθαι χρεῶν,

ION

Uprightness, use and nature bred in me
 For Phoebus' service. Thinking on all this,
 Father, I more esteem things here than there.
 Mine own life let me live. Content with little
 Hath charm no less than joy in great estate.

CHORUS

Well hast thou said, so be that those I love
 In these thy words may find their happiness.

XUTHUS

Of this no more : but learn to bear thy fortune. 650
 For, where I found thee, there would I begin,
 By making thee a solemn public feast,
 And thy birth-sacrifice, not offered yet.
 Now to the feast as my guest bringing thee,
 I'll make thee cheer : then to the Athenians' land
 Bring thee as one that travelleth, not as mine.
 For, sooth, I have no heart to vex my wife
 With mine own bliss, while she is childless still.
 And I shall find a time to bring my queen
 To suffer thee to take my sceptred sway. 660

Ion¹ I name thee, of that happy chance
 In that, as forth Apollo's shrine I came,
 First lighted I on thee. Now all thy friends
 To this glad feast of sacrifice gather thou,
 To bid, as leaving Delphi soon, farewell.
 You, handmaids, I command, speak not hereof.
 Death—if ye say to my wife anything!

ION

I go : yet to my fortune one things lacks :
 For, save I find her who gave life to me,
 My life is naught. If one prayer be vouchsafed, 670

¹ *Ion*, "coming," because met at his *coming forth*.

ΙΩΝ

ἐκ τῶν Ἀθηνῶν μ' ἡ τεκοῦς' εἶη γυνή,
ὥς μοι γένηται μητρόθεν παρρησία.
καθαρὰν γὰρ ἦν τις εἰς πόλιν πέσῃ ξένος,
κὰν τοῖς λόγοισιν ἀστὸς ᾗ, τό γε στόμα
δοῦλον πέπαται κοῦκ ἔχει παρρησίαν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὀρώ δάκρυα καὶ πενθίμους στρ.
ἀλαλαγὰς στεναγμάτων τ' εἰσβολάς,
ὅταν ἐμὰ τύραννος εὐπαιδίαν
680 πόσιν ἔχοντ' εἰδῇ,
αὐτὴ δ' ἅπαις ᾗ καὶ λελειμμένη τέκνων.
τίν', ὦ παῖ πρόμαντι Λατοῦς ἔχρη-
σας ὑμνωδίαν ;
πόθεν ὁ παῖς ὅδ' ἀμφὶ ναοὺς σέθεν
τρόφimos ἐξέβα, γυναικῶν τίνος ;
οὐ γάρ με σαίνει
θέσφατα, μή τιν' ἔχῃ δόλον.
δειμαίνω συμφορὰν
690 ἐφ' ὃ ποτε βάσεται.
ἄτοπος ἄτοπα γὰρ παραδίδωσί μοι
τάδε θεοῦ φήμα.
ἔχει δόλον τύχαν θ' ὁ παῖς
ἄλλων τραφεῖς ἐξ αἱμάτων.
τίς οὐ τάδε ξυνοίσεται ;

φίλοι, πότερ' ἐμᾷ δεσποίνα ἀντ.
τάδε τορῶς ἐς οὓς γεγωνήσομεν,
πόσιν, ἐν ᾧ τὰ πάντ' ἔχουσ' ἐλπίδων
μέτοχος ἦν τλάμων ;
700 νῦν δ' ἡ μὲν ἔρρει συμφοραῖς, ὁ δ' εὐτυχεῖ,
πολιὸν εἰσπεσοῦσα γῆρας, πόσις δ'

ION

Of Athens' daughters may my mother be,
That by my mother may free speech be mine.
The alien who entereth a burg
Of pure blood, burgher though he be in name,
Hath not free speech ; he bears a bondman's tongue.

[*Exeunt XUTHUS and ION.*]

CHORUS

O vision of tears, and of fierce heart-burning (*Str.*)
Breaking forth into shrieks and the onrush of
sighing,
When my lady beholdeth her chieftain returning
In glory of fatherhood—knoweth that yearning
Of childlessness waiteth her, hunger undying ! 680
Seer-son of Latona, what strain hast thou chanted ?
Whence came he, the waif in thy temple-porch
lying ?
Thy fosterling—yea, but a mother yet wanted !
And the oracle stirreth mine heart to defying
Of its tones with the whisper of treachery haunted.
I fear whereunto it will grow,
This fate thou hast caused us to know :
Too strange for my credence it is. 690
Child fathered of fortune and treason !
Child alien of blood !—it were reason
That all should cry yea unto this.

Friends, shall I bear to my lady the story ? (*Ant.*)
Shall I speak in her ear, her lord's baseness
revealing ?
Whom she counted her all and in all—heretofore he
Had share in her dreams of a yet-coming glory.
Now in woe is she whelmed, but his heart hath
found healing, [strewing !
That he flouts the dear tresses and eld's silver- 700

ἀτίετος φίλων.
μέλεος, ὃς θυραῖος ἐλθὼν δόμους
μέγαν ἐς ὄλβον οὐκ ἔσωσεν τύχας.

ὄλοιτ' ὄλοιτο
πότνιαν ἑξαπαφὼν ἐμάν·
καὶ θεοῖσιν μὴ τύχοι
καλλίφλογα πέλανον ἐπὶ
πυρὶ καθαγνίσας· τὸ δ' ἐμὸν εἴσεται

710

* * * * *

τύραννος ἢ φίλα φίλον.¹
ἤδη πέλας δείπνων κυρεῖ
παῖς καὶ πατήρ νέος νέων.

ἰὼ δειράδες Παρνασοῦ πέτρας ἐπῶδ.
ἔχουσαι σκόπελον οὐράνιον θ' ἔδραν,
ἵνα Βάκχιος ἀμφιπύρους ἀνέχων πεύκας
λαιψηρὰ πηδᾶ νυκτιπόλοις ἅμα σὺν Βάκχαις.
μή τί ποτ' εἰς ἐμὴν πόλιν ἵκοιθ' ὁ παῖς,
νέαν δ' ἀμέραν ἀπολιπὼν θάνοι.
στενομένα γὰρ ἂν πόλις ἔχοι σκῆψιν
ξενικὸν εἰσβολάν.

720

ἄλλης ὁ πάρος ἀρχαγὸς ὦν
'Ερεχθεὺς ἄναξ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὦ πρέσβυ παιδαγῶγ' 'Ερεχθέως πατὴρ
τοῦμοῦ ποτ' ὄντος, ἡνίκ' ἦν ἔτ' ἐν φάει,
ἔπαιρε σαιτὸν πρὸς θεοῦ χρηστήρια,
ὥς μοι συνησθῆς, εἴ τι Λοξίας ἄναξ
θέσπισμα παίδων εἰς γονὰς ἐφθέγγατο·
σὺν τοῖς φίλοις γὰρ ἡδὺ μὲν πρᾶσσειν καλῶς·
ὁ μὴ γένοιτο δ', εἴ τι τυγχάνοι κακόν,

730

¹ Bayfield : for MSS. τυραννίδος φίλα.

ION

O caitiff and outlander, he that came stealing
On the wealth of a house he saved not from un-
doing!¹— [dealing—

Who would cozen my lady with treacherous
False one, away to thy ruin, thy ruin!

O'er the consecrate cake he shall lay
Mid your altar-flames, Gods, let them play

Unavailingly! Ah but my queen 710
Shall know that I hold her the dearer!

Lo this strange feast draweth nearer
When the sire's strange son shall be seen.

Heights of Parnassus, rock-ridges upbearing (*Epode*)
The watchtower crags and the cloudland dome,
Where Bacchus, uptossing the pines flame-glaring,
Leaps mid his Bacchants through darkness that
roam,

May never yon boy to my city come faring!
Be his birth-day the day of his doom! 720
For in sooth should our city be hard bestead
If an alien host to her hearths shall be led.
Suffice us Erechtheus, the kingly head
Of the Ancient Home!

*Enter CREUSA and OLD SERVANT, climbing the ascent
to the Temple.*

CREUSA

Thou reverend child-ward of my sometime sire
Erechtheus, while he walked yet in the light,
Bear up, and press to yon God's oracle,
That thou mayst share my joy, if Loxias King
A boding-pledge of sons hath uttered forth.
'Tis sweet with friends to share prosperity: 730
And if—which God forbid—if ill befall,

¹ By perpetuating the race of true-born Erechtheids.

εἰς ὄμματ' εὖνου φωτὸς ἐμβλέψαι γλυκύ.
ἐγὼ δέ σ', ὥσπερ καὶ σὺ πατέρ' ἐμόν ποτε,
δέσποιν' ὁμως οὐς' ἀντικηδεύω πατρός.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὦ θύγατερ, ἄξι' ἀξίων γεννητόρων
ἦθη φυλάσσεις κοῦ καταισχύνας' ἔχεις
τοὺς σοὺς παλαιοὺς ἐκγόνους αὐτόχθονας.
ἔλχ' ἔλκε πρὸς μέλαθρα καὶ κόμιζέ με.
αἰπεινά τοι μαντεῖα· τοῦ γήρως δέ μοι
740 συνεκπονούσα κῶλον ἱατρὸς γενοῦ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἔπου νυν· ἔχνος δ' ἐκφύλασσ' ὅπου τίθης.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ιδού.

τὸ τοῦ ποδὸς μὲν βραδύ, τὸ τοῦ δὲ νοῦ ταχύ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

βάκτρῃ δ' ἐρείδου περιφερῇ στίβον χθονός.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

καὶ τοῦτο τυφλόν, ὅταν ἐγὼ βλέπω βραχύ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὀρθῶς ἔλεξας· ἀλλὰ μὴ πάρες κόπῳ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὔκουν ἐκὼν γε· τοῦ δ' ἀπόντος οὐ κρατῶ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

γυναῖκες, ἰστῶν τῶν ἐμῶν καὶ κερκίδος
δούλευμα πιστόν, τίνα τύχην λαβὼν πόσις
βέβηκε παίδων ὧνπερ εἵνεχ' ἦκομεν,
750 σημήνατ'· εἰ γὰρ ἀγαθὰ μοι μηνύσετε,
οὐκ εἰς ἀπίστους δεσπότας βαλεῖς χαράν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ δαῖμον.

ION.

'Tis sweet to gaze in eyes of sympathy.
Now thine old loving tendance of my sire
I, though thy lady, render back to thee.

OLD SERVANT

My daughter, spirit worthy of noble sires
Thou keepest, and thou hast not put to shame
Thine old forefathers, children of the soil.
Draw, draw me towards the shrines, and bring me on.
Steep is the god-ward path : be thou physician
Unto mine age, and help my toiling limbs. 740

CREUSA

Follow : take heed where thou dost plant thy feet.

OLD SERVANT

Lo there !
Slow is the foot, still by the mind outstripped.

CREUSA

Try with thy staff the ground : lean hard thereon.

OLD SERVANT

Blind guide is this when mine eyes serve so ill.

CREUSA

Sooth said : yet yield not thou to weariness.

OLD SERVANT

I would not, but my lost strength I command not.

CREUSA

Women, which do leal service at my loom
And shuttle, show what fortune hath my lord
Found touching issue, for which cause we came.
For, if ye speak good tidings unto me, 750
Your queen shall not forget the debt of joy.

CHORUS

Ah fate !

ΙΩΝ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τὸ φροῖμιον μὲν τῶν λόγων οὐκ εὐτυχές.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ τλάμων.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἢ τι θεσφάτοισι δεσποτῶν νοσῶ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἶεν· τί δρῶμεν, θάνατος ὧν κεῖται πέρι;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τίς ἦδε μοῦσα, χῶ φόβος τίνων πέρι;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εἴπωμεν ἢ σιγῶμεν; ἢ τί δράσομεν;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

εἴφ'· ὥς ἔχεις γε συμφορὰν τιν' εἰς ἐμέ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

760 εἰρήσεται τοι, κεῖ θανεῖν μέλλω διπλῇ.
οὐκ ἔστι σοι, δέσποιν', ἐπ' ἀγκάλαις λαβεῖν
τέκν' οὐδὲ μαστῇ σῶ προσαρμόσαι ποτέ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὦ μοι, θάνοιμι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

θύγατερ—

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγὼ συμφορᾶς.
ἔλαβον, ἔπαθον ἄχος ἀβίотον, φίλαι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

διοιχόμεσθα, τέκνον.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

αἰαῖ αἰαῖ
διανταῖος ἔτυπεν ὀδύνα με πλευ-
μόνων τῶνδ' ἔσω.

ION

OLD SERVANT (*aside*).

No happy-boding prelude of their speech !

CHORUS

Ah hapless !

OLD SERVANT (*aside*)

Ha, sinks mine heart for my lords' oracle !

CHORUS

What shall we do when death is in the path ?

CREUSA

What means this strain, and wherefore is your fear ?

CHORUS

Speech ?—silence ?—what is it that we should do ?

CREUSA

Speak : something ye keep back that toucheth me.

CHORUS

Thou shalt be told,—yea, though I die twice over. 760

'Tis not for thee, my queen, in arms to fold

Children, nor press them ever to thy breast.

CREUSA

Ah, would I might die !

OLD SERVANT

Daughter—

CREUSA

Ah wretch !—ah me for my misery !

I have gotten sore hurt, my friends : what is life
unto me ?

OLD SERVANT

Undone—thou and I !

O child !

CREUSA

Ah me, ah me ! for the anguish-dart

Hath pierced me through, and hath plunged deep
into mine heart.

ΙΩΝ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

μήπω στενάξης,

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἀλλὰ πάρεισι γόοι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

πρὶν ἂν μάθωμεν—

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

770

ἀγγελίαν τίνα μοι;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

εἰ ταῦτ' ἀπράσπων δεσπότης τῆς συμφορᾶς
κοινωνός ἐστιν, ἥ μόνη σὺ δυστυχεῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κείνῳ μὲν, ὦ γεραῖέ, παῖδα Λοξίας
ἔδωκεν, ἰδίᾳ δ' εὐτυχεῖ ταύτης δίχα.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τόδ' ἐπὶ τῷδε κακὸν ἄκρον ἔλακες ἔλακες
ἄχος ἐμοὶ στένειν.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

πότερα δὲ φύναι δεῖ γυναικὸς ἔκ τινος
τὸν παῖδ' ὃν εἶπας, ἥ γεγῶτ' ἐθέσπισεν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

780

ἤδη πεφυκότ' ἐκτελῇ νεανίαν
δίδωσιν αὐτῷ Λοξίας· παρῇ δ' ἐγώ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

πῶς φῆς; ἄφατον ἄφατον ἀναύδητον
λόγον ἐμοὶ θροεῖς.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

κάμουγε. πῶς δ' ὁ χρησμός ἐκπεραίνεται
σαφέστερόν μοι φράζε, χῶστις ἔσθ' ὁ παῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὅτῳ ξυναντήσκειν ἐκ ναοῦ συθεῖς
πρώτῳ πόσις σός, παῖδ' ἔδωκ' αὐτῷ θεός.

ION

OLD SERVANT

Nay, moan not yet—

CREUSA

But wailings the soul of me fill !

OLD SERVANT

Ere we shall learn—

CREUSA

What tidings remain for me still ? 770

OLD SERVANT

If in the same calamity our lord
Have part, or thine alone misfortune be.

CHORUS

Ancient, to him hath Loxias given a son,
And private joy is his, unshared of her.

CREUSA

Ah sorrow on sorrow, for crown of sorrow, and woes
for my sighing !

OLD SERVANT

But of some woman must he yet be born,
This child ?—or did the God proclaim him born ?

CHORUS

Already born—nay more, a stripling grown 780
Doth Loxias give him. I was there, and heard.

CREUSA

How sayest thou ?—nameless, unspeakable things in
mine ears art thou crying—

OLD SERVANT

And mine. But how works out the oracle ?
More clearly tell me : who the lad is, tell.

CHORUS

Whomso thy lord should first meet as he passed
From the God's fane, the God gave him for son.

ΙΩΝ

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

790 ὀτοτοτοῖ· τὸ δ' ἐμὸν ἄτεκνον ἄτεκνον ἔλαβεν
ἄρα βίοτον, ἐρημία δ' ὀρφανούς
δόμους οἰκήσω.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τίς οὖν ἐχρήσθη; τῷ συνήψ' ἵχνος ποδὸς
πόσις ταλαίνης; πῶς δὲ ποῦ νιν εἰσιδών;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἶσθ', ὦ φίλη δέσποινα, τὸν νεανίαν
ὃς τόνδ' ἔσαιρε ναόν; οὗτος ἔσθ' ὁ παῖς.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἀν' ὑγρὸν ἀμπταίνην αἰθέρα πόρσω γαί-
ας Ἑλλαλίας, ἀστέρας ἐσπέρους,
οἶον οἶον ἄλγος ἔπαθον, φίλαι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

800 ὄνομα δὲ ποῖον αὐτὸν ὀνομάζει πατήρ;
οἶσθ', ἡ σιωπῇ τοῦτ' ἀκύρωτον μένει;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ἴων', ἐπεῖπερ πρῶτος ἤντησεν πατρί.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

μητρὸς δ' ὁποίας ἐστίν;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἔχω φράσαι.
φροῦδος δ', ἔν' εἰδῆς πάντα τὰπ' ἐμοῦ, γέρον,
παιδὸς προθύσων ξένια καὶ γενέθλια,
σκηνὰς ἐς ἱερὰς τῆσδε λαθραίως πόσις,
κοινῇ ξυνάψων δαῖτα παιδὶ τῷ νέφ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

810 δέσποινα, προδεδόμεσθα, σὺν γάρ σοι νοσῶ,
τοῦ σοῦ πρὸς ἀνδρός, καὶ μεμηχανημένως
ὑβριζόμεσθα δωμάτων τ' Ἐρεχθέως

ION

CREUSA

Ah me ! ah me !—and my weird
Of barrenness, barrenness grippeth my life!—
desolation-oppressed 790
Shall I live on, living in childless halls !

OLD SERVANT

Who was the child foretold ? whom met he first,
Our sad queen's lord ? How saw he him, and where ?

CHORUS

Rememberest thou, O dear my queen, the youth
That swept the temple's floor ? That son is he.

CREUSA

Oh to flee on the wings of a bird
Through the ocean of air, and from Hellas afar to
the stars of the west !

Such pain on me, friends, such anguish falls !

OLD SERVANT

And what name hath his father given to him ? 800
Know'st thou ? Or bideth this unfixed, unsaid ?

CHORUS

Ion, since he was first to meet his sire.

OLD SERVANT

His mother, who ?

CHORUS

Thereof can I say naught.
My lady's spouse hath stol'n—that all my tale
Be known of thee—into the festal tent,
To sacrifice for welcoming and birth,
And spread a public feast for this new son.

OLD SERVANT

Betrayed, Queen, are we—for thy pain is mine—
Of this thy lord ; by treason-stratagems
Insulted ; from Erechtheus' palace-halls 810

81

ἐκβαλλόμεσθα· καὶ σὸν οὐ στυγῶν πόσιν
 λέγω, σὲ μέντοι μᾶλλον ἢ κείνον φιλῶν·
 ὅστις σε γήμας ξένος ἐπείσελθὼν πόλιν
 καὶ δῶμα καὶ σὴν παραλαβὼν παγκληρίαν,
 ἄλλης γυναικὸς παῖδας ἐκκαρπούμενος
 λάθρα πέφηνεν· ὡς λάθρα δ', ἐγὼ φράσω·
 ἐπεὶ σ' ἄτεκνον ἦσθαι, οὐκ ἔστεργέ σοι
 ὅμοιος εἶναι τῆς τύχης τ' ἴσον φέρειν,
 λαβὼν δὲ δούλα λέκτρα νυμφεύσας λάθρα
 820 τὸν παῖδ' ἔφυσεν, ἐξενωμένον δέ τῳ
 Δελφῶν δίδωσιν ἐκτρέφειν· ὁ δ' ἐν θεοῦ
 δόμοισιν ἄφαιτος, ὡς λάθροι, παιδεύεται.
 νεανίαν δ' ὡς ἦσθαι ἐκτεθραμμένον,
 ἔλθειν σ' ἔπεισε δεῦρ' ἀπαιδίας χάριν.
 καὶ ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἐψεύσαθ', ὅδε δ' ἐψεύσατο
 πάλαι τρέφων τὸν παῖδα, καὶ πλεκεν πλοκάς
 τοιαῶν· ἀλὺς μὲν ἀνέφερ' εἰς τὸν δαίμονα,
 †ἐλθὼν δὲ καὶ τὸν χρόνον ἀμύνεσθαι θέλων†
 τυραννίδ' αὐτῷ περιβαλεῖν ἔμελλε γῆς.
 830 καινὸν δὲ τοῦνομ' ἀνὰ χρόνον πεπλασμένον,
 Ἴων, ἰόντι δῆθεν ὅτι συνήντετο.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἴμοι, πανούργους ἄνδρας ὡς αἰὲ στυγῶ,
 οἳ συντιθέντες τᾶδικ' εἴτα μηχαναῖς
 κοσμοῦσι, φαῦλον χρηστὸν ἂν λαβεῖν φίλον
 θέλοιμι μᾶλλον ἢ κακὸν σοφώτερον.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

καὶ τῶνδ' ἀπάντων ἔσχατον πείσει κακόν·
 ἀμήτορ', ἀναρίθμητον, ἐκ δούλης τινὸς
 γυναικὸς, εἰς σὸν δῶμα δεσπότην ἄγειν.
 840 ἀπλοῦν ἂν ἦν γὰρ τὸ κακόν, εἰ παρ' εὐγενοῦς
 μητρός, πιθῶν σε, σὴν λέγων ἀπαιδίαν,

ION

Cast forth ! And this I say, as hating not
Thy lord, but better loving thee than him,
Who came a stranger to thy burg and home,
Wedded thee, and received thine heritage,
And of another woman gat him sons
Clandestine : this " clandestine " will I prove :—
Knowing thee barren, he was not content
To share thy fortune, to partake thy lot,
But took a slave to his clandestine bed,
Begot this son, from Athens sent him, gave 820
Unto some Delphian's fostering : for concealment
Was he reared in the temple, consecrate.

Then, when he knew the stripling fully grown,
He drew thee hither by the hope of sons.
So, not the God hath lied, but this man lied,
Rearing so long the lad, weaving such plots.
Detected here, he would cast it on the God :
But, safe in Athens, he would set her crown
Upon him, guarding 'gainst the chance of time.
But this *new name's* misdated forgery ! 830
Ion—set eye on him then first, forsooth !

CHORUS

Ah me ! how evermore I loathe the knave
That plotteth wrongs, and then with stratagem
Tricks forth ! Be mine the friend of simple soul
Yet honest, rather than the craftier villain.

OLD SERVANT

And a worse ill than all this must thou know,
To take into thine house for lord thereof
A slave's brat, motherless, of none account !
'Twere but one ill, if from a free-born womb,
With thy consent, pleading thy barrenness, 840

ἔσώκισ' οἴκους· εἰ δὲ σοὶ τόδ' ἦν πικρόν,
 τῶν Αἰόλου νιν χρῆν ὀρεχθῆναι γάμων.
 ἐκ τῶνδε δεῖ σε δὴ γυναικεῖόν τι δρᾶν·
 ἢ γὰρ ξίφος λαβοῦσαν ἢ δόλῳ τινὶ
 ἢ φαρμάκοισι σὸν κατακτεῖναι πόσιν
 καὶ παῖδα, πρὶν σοὶ θάνατον ἐκ κείνων μολεῖν.
 [εἰ γάρ γ' ὑφήσεις τοῦδ', ἀπαλλάξει βίον·
 δυοῖν γὰρ ἐχθροῖν εἰς ἓν ἐλθόντοιν στέγος,
 ἢ θάτερον δεῖ δυστυχεῖν ἢ θάτερον.]
 850 ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν σοι καὶ συνεκπονεῖν θέλω,
 καὶ συμφονεύειν παῖδ' ἐπεισελθὼν δόμοις
 οὐ δαῖθ' ὀπλίζει, καὶ τροφεῖα δεσπότης
 ἀποδοὺς θανεῖν τε ζῶν τε φέγγος εἰσορᾶν.
 ἐν γάρ τι τοῖς δούλοισιν αἰσχύνῃ φέρει,
 τοῦνομα· τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντα τῶν ἐλευθέρων
 οὐδὲν κακίων δούλος, ὅστις ἐσθλὸς ἦ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κἀγώ, φίλη δέσποινα, συμφορὰν θέλω
 κοινουμένη τήνδ' ἢ θανεῖν ἢ ζῆν καλῶς.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

860 ὦ ψυχά, πῶς σιγάσω ;
 πῶς δὲ σκοτίας ἀναφήνω
 εὐνάς, αἰδοὺς δ' ἀπολειφθῶ ;
 τί γὰρ ἐμπόδιον κώλυμ' ἔτι μοι ;
 πρὸς τίν' ἀγῶνας τιθέμεσθ' ἀρετῆς,
 οὐ πόσις ἡμῶν προδότης γέγονεν ;
 στέρομαι δ' οἴκων, στέρομαι παίδων,
 φροῦδαι δ' ἐλπίδες, ἃς διαθέσθαι
 χρήζουσα καλῶς οὐκ ἐδυνήθην,
 σιγῶσα γάμους,
 σιγῶσα τόκους πολυκλαύτους.
 870 ἀλλ' οὐ τὸ Διὸς πολὺάστρον ἔδος

ION

He found an heir. Or, if this liked thee not,
 He ought to have sought a wife of Aeolus' race.
 Now, something worthy of woman must thou do—
 Grasp thou the sword, or by some wiliness
 Or poison slay thine husband and his son,
 Ere treacherous death shall come from them to thee.
 For, if thou flinch, 'tis thou shalt lose thy life :
 For, when two foes beneath one roof be met,
 This one or that one must the victim be.
 Willing am I with thee to share this work, 850
 To enter the pavilion, slay the lad
 Where he prepares the feast :—repaying so
 My lords their nurture, let me die or live !
 There is but one thing bringeth shame to slaves,
 The name : in all beside no slave is worse
 Than free men, so he bear an upright soul.

CHORUS

I too, dear mistress, I consent to share
 Thy fate,—or death, or honourable life.

CREUSA

O, how keep silence, my soul ?
 Yet how shall I dare to unroll 860
 Deeds hidden of darkness, and cast the shame behind
 me ? [bind me ?
 Yet what thing remaineth to fetter me, what thing to
 With whom can I stand in virtue's glorious strife ?
 Hath not mine husband a traitor been shown to his
 wife ?
 I am wholly of home bereft, am of children bereft :
 Of the hopes unavailing I cherished not one is left,
 Who dreamed I should order all things well,
 Yet naught of that bridal of horror tell,
 Naught of the birth amid tears that befell.
 Now nay—by the palace of Zeus star-brightened, 870

καὶ τὴν ἐπ' ἐμοῖς σκοπέλοισι θεὰν
 λίμνης τ' ἐνύδρου Τριτωνιάδος
 πότνιαν ἀκτάν,
 οὐκέτι κρύψω λέχος, ὥς στέρνων
 ἀπονησαμένη ῥᾶων ἔσομαι.
 στάζουσι κόραι δακρύοισιν ἐμαί,
 ψυχὰ δ' ἀλγεῖ κακοβουληθεῖς'
 ἐκ τ' ἀνθρώπων ἐκ τ' ἀθανάτων,
 οὗς ἀποδείξω
 880 λέκτρων προδότας ἀχαρίστους.

ὦ τὰς ἐπταφθόγγου μέλπων
 κιθάρας ἐνοπᾶν, αἶτ' ἀγραύλοισ
 κέρασιν ἐν ἀψύχοις ἀχεῖ
 μουσᾶν ὕμνους εὐαχήτους,
 σοὶ μομφάν, ὦ Λατοῦς παῖ,
 πρὸς τάνδ' αὐγὰν αὐδάσω.
 ἦλθές μοι χρυσῷ χαίταν
 μαρμαίρων, εὐτ' εἰς κόλπους
 890 κρόκεα πέταλα φάρεσιν ἔδρεπον
 ἀνθίζειν χρυσανταυγῇ
 λευκοῖς δ' ἐμφὺς καρποῖσιν
 χειρῶν εἰς ἄντρον κοίτας
 κραυγὰν ὦ μᾶτέρ μ' αὐδῶσαν
 θεὸς ὁμευνέτας
 ἄγες ἀναιδεία
 Κύπριδι χάριν πρᾶσσων.

τίκτω δ' ἅ δύστανός σοι
 κοῦρον, τὸν φρίκα ματρός
 εἰς εὐνὰν βάλλω τὰν σάν,
 900 ἵνα με λέχεσι μέλεα μέλεος
 ἐξεύξω τὰν δύστανον.

ION

By the watchtower crag where my Goddess's
 throne is,
 By the holy shore of the mere Tritonis
 Full-brimming mid Libya's plain,
 Mine outrage no more will I hide, that lightened
 My bosom may be of its pain.
 Mine eyes are a fountain of tears fast-welling,
 And mine heart is betrayed and anguish-riven,
 Betrayed of lovers on earth, in heaven !
 I will speak it, that thankless name forth telling,
 And the tale of the traitor to love shall be given. 880

Lord of the seven-voiced lyre, who attunest the cry of
 its strings, [note sings
 Under whose fingers the lifeless awaketh, a sweet
 From the horn of the ox of the field, the chant of the
 Muses outrings—

Child of Latona, I cry to the Sun—I will publish
 thy shame ! [the flowers as I came
 Thou, with thy tresses a-shimmer with gold, through
 Plucking the crocuses, heaping my veil with their
 gold-litten flame, 890

Cam'st on me, caughtest the poor pallid wrists of mine
 hands and didst hale
 Unto thy couch in the cave,—“ Mother ! mother ! ” I
 shrieked out my wail,—
 Wroughtest the pleasure of Cypris : no shame made
 the god-lover quail.

Wretched I bare thee a child, and I cast him with
 shuddering throe [a bride-bed of woe.
 Forth on thy couch where thou forcedst thy victim, 900
 Lost—my poor baby and thine ! for the eagles
 devoured him :—and lo,

ΙΩΝ

910

οἷμοι μοι· καὶ νῦν ἔρρει
πτανοῖς ἄρπασθεὶς θοίνα
παῖς μοι καὶ σὸς τλάμων,
σὺ δὲ κιθάρα κλάξεις
παιᾶνας μέλπων.

920

ὦή, τὸν Λατοῦς αὐδῶ,
ὃς ὁμφὰν κληροῖς
πρὸς χρυσεούς θάκους καὶ
γαίας μεσσήρεις ἔδρας,
εἰς οὓς αὐδὰν καρύξω·
ἰὼ κακὸς εὐνάτωρ,
ὃς τῷ μὲν ἐμῷ νυμφεύτῃ
χάριν οὐ προλαβὼν
παῖδ' εἰς οἴκους οἰκίζεις·
ὁ δ' ἐμὸς γενέτας καὶ σὸς ἀμαθὴς
οἶωνοῖς ἔρρει συλαθείς, [οἰκεία]
σπάργανα ματέρος ἐξαλλάξας.
μισεῖ σ' ἅ Δᾶλος καὶ δάφνας
ἔρνεα φοίνικα παρ' ἀβροκόμαν,
ἐνθα λοχεύματα σέμν' ἐλοχεύσατο
Λατὼ Δίοισί σε καρποῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἷμοι, μέγας θησαυρὸς ὥς ἀνοίγνυται
κακῶν, ἐφ' οἷσι πᾶς ἂν ἐκβάλοι δάκρυ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

930

ὦ θύγατερ, οἴκτου σὸν βλέπων ἐμπίπλαμαι
πρόσωπον, ἔξω δ' ἐγενόμην γνώμης ἐμῆς.
κακῶν γὰρ ἄρτι κῦμ' ὑπεξαντλῶν φρενί,
πρύμνηθεν αἶρει μ' ἄλλο σὼν λόγων ὕπο,
οὓς ἐκβαλοῦσα τῶν παρεστώτων κακῶν
μετήλθες ἄλλων πημάτων κακὰς ὁδοὺς.

ION

Victory-songs to thy lyre dost thou chant! Ho, I
call to thee, son
Born to Latona, Dispenser of Boding, on gold-
gleaming throne
Midmost of earth who art sitting:—thine ears shall
be pierced with my moan! 910

Ah, ravisher-bridegroom thou!

What ailed thee to give to my spouse—
Requiting no service, I trow!—

A son to be heir to his house?
But my baby and thine, O heartless, was taken
For a prey of the eagles: long ere now
Were the swaddling-bands of his mother forsaken.

Thy Delos doth hate thee, thy bay-boughs abhor thee,
By the palm-tree of feathery frondage that rose 920
Where in sacred travail Latona bore thee
Unto Zeus for the fruit of her throes.

CHORUS

Ah me, what mighty treasure-house is opened
Of sore affliction whereat all shall weep!

OLD SERVANT

Ah daughter, gazing on thy face I fill
With pity: yea, my mind is all distraught.
For, while one surge of ills yet drowns my soul,
High rolls astern another from thy words.
For, soon as thou hadst told thy present ills,
Thou followedst the dark track of other woes. 930

ΙΩΝ

τί φῆς ; τίνα λόγον Λοξίου κατηγορεῖς ;
 ποῖον τεκεῖν φῆς παῖδα ; ποῦ θεῖναι πόλεως
 θηρσὶν φίλον τύμβευμ' ; ἀνελθέ μοι πάλιν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

αἰσχύνομαι μὲν σ', ὦ γέρον, λέξω δ' ὅμως.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὥς συσπενάζειν γ' οἶδα γενναίως φίλοις.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἄκουε τοίνυν· οἶσθα Κεκροπίας πέτρας
 πρόσβορρον ἄντρον, ἃς Μακρὰς κυκλήσκομεν ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οἶδ', ἔνθα Πανὸς ἄδυντα καὶ βωμοὶ πέλας.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἐνταῦθ' ἀγῶνα δεινὸν ἡγωνίσμεθα.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

940 τίν' ; ὥς ἀπαντᾷ δάκρυά μοι τοῖς σοῖς λόγοις.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

Φοίβω ξυνήψ' ἄκουσα δύστηνον γάμον.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὦ θύγατερ· ἄρ' ἦν ταῦθ' ἃ γ' ἡσθόμην ἐγώ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐκ οἶδ'· ἀληθῆ δ' εἰ λέγεις, φαίημεν ἄν.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

νόσον κρυφαίαν ἥνικ' ἔστενες λάθρα ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τότ' ἦν ἃ νῦν σοι φανερὰ σημαίνω κακά.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

κατ' ἐξέκλεψας πῶς Ἀπόλλωνος γάμους ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἔτεκον· ἀνάσχου ταῦτ' ἐμοῦ κλύων, γέρον.

ION

What say'st thou? What dost lay to Loxias' charge?
What child hast borne? In Athens where didst cast
him
To gladden a living grave?—tell yet again.

CREUSA

Ancient, I blush before thee, yet will tell.

OLD SERVANT

To weep with friends that weep, full well I know.

CREUSA

Hear then :—the Rocks of Cecrops knowest thou,
The Long Cliff named?—the northward-facing cave?

OLD SERVANT

I know: Pan's shrine and altars stand thereby.

CREUSA

Even there I agonized in that dread strife—

OLD SERVANT

What?—lo, how start my tears to meet thy words! 940

CREUSA

With Phoebus linked sore loth in woeful bridal.

OLD SERVANT

Ah daughter, was it this myself had marked?

CREUSA

Had marked?—If sooth thou sayest, I will tell.

OLD SERVANT

Thy secret sighing as with hidden pain?

CREUSA

Yea; then befell the ills I now lay bare.

OLD SERVANT

And how didst thou conceal Apollo's rape?

CREUSA

I travailed—bear to hear my tale, old friend!—

ΙΩΝ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ποῦ ; τίς λοχεύει σ' ; ἡ μόνη μοχθεῖς τάδε ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

μόνη κατ' ἄντρον οὐπερ ἐξεύχθην γάμοις.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

950 ὁ παῖς δὲ ποῦ 'στιν, ἵνα σὺ μηκέτ' ᾗς ἄπαις ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τέθνηκεν, ὦ γεραιέ, θηρσὶν ἐκτεθεῖς.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τέθνηκ' ; Ἀπόλλων δ' ὁ κακὸς οὐδὲν ἤρκεσεν ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐκ ἤρκεσ' . "Αἶδου δ' ἐν δόμοις παιδεύεται.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τίς γάρ νιν ἐξέθηκεν ; οὐ γὰρ δὴ σύ γε.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἡμεῖς, ἐν ὄρφνῃ σπαργανώσαντες πέπλοις.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὐδὲ ξυνήδει σοί τις ἔκθεσιν τέκνου ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

αἱ ξυμφοραὶ γε καὶ τὸ λανθάνειν μόνον.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

καὶ πῶς ἐν ἄντρῳ παῖδα σὺν λιπεῖν ἔτλης ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

πῶς δ' ; οἰκτρὰ πολλὰ στόματος ἐκβαλοῦς' ἔπη.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

φεῦ·

960 τλήμων σὺ τόλμης, ὁ δὲ θεὸς μάλλον σέθεν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

εἰ παῖδά γ' εἶδες χεῖρας ἐκτείνοντά μοι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

μαστὸν διώκοντ' ἢ πρὸς ἀγκάλαις πεσεῖν ;

ION

OLD SERVANT

Who tended thee ? . . . alone in trial's hour !

CREUSA

Alone within the cave that saw my rape.

OLD SERVANT

And the boy, where ?—that thou no more be childless. 950

CREUSA

Dead is he, ancient,—unto beasts cast out.

OLD SERVANT

Dead ?—and Apollo, traitor ! helped thee naught ?

CREUSA

Helped not. The child is nursed in Hades' halls.

OLD SERVANT

Who cast him forth ? Not thou—O never thou !

CREUSA

Even I. My vesture darkling swaddled him.

OLD SERVANT

Nor any knew the exposing of the child ?

CREUSA

None—Misery and Secrecy alone.

OLD SERVANT

How couldst thou leave thy babe within the cave ?

CREUSA

Ah how ?—O pitiful farewells I moaned !

OLD SERVANT

Poor heart of steel !—O God's heart harder yet ! 960

CREUSA

Ah, hadst thou seen the babe's hands stretched to
me !

OLD SERVANT

Seeking the breast, the cradle of thine arms ?

ΙΩΝ

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἐνταῦθ', ἵν' οὐκ ὦν ἄδικ' ἔπασχεν ἐξ ἐμοῦ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

σοὶ δ' ἐς τί δόξ' εἰσῆλθεν ἐκβαλεῖν τέκνον ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὥς τὸν θεὸν σώσοντα τὸν γ' αὐτοῦ γόνον.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οἴμοι, δόμων σῶν ὄλβος ὥς χειμάζεται.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τί κρᾶτα κρίψας, ὦ γέρον, δακρυρροεῖς ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

σέ καὶ πατέρα σὸν δυστυχοῦντας εἰσορῶν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τὰ θνητὰ τοιαῦτ' οὐδὲν ἐν ταύτῳ μένει.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

970 μὴ νῦν ἔτ' οἴκτων, θύγατερ, ἀντεχώμεθα.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τί γάρ με χρή δρᾶν ; ἀπορία τὸ δυστυχεῖν.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τὸν πρῶτον ἀδικήσαντά σ' ἀποτίνου θεόν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

καὶ πῶς τὰ κρείσσω θνητὸς οὐσ' ὑπερδράμω ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

πίμπρη τὰ σεμνὰ Λοξίου χρηστήρια.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

δέδοικα· καὶ νῦν πημάτων ἄδην ἔχω.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τὰ δυνατὰ νυν τόλμησον, ἄνδρα σὸν κτανεῖν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

αἰδούμεθ' εὐνάς τὰς τόθ' ἡνίκ' ἐσθλὸς ἦν.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ παῖδα τὸν ἐπὶ σοὶ πεφηνότα.

ION

CREUSA

Where he lay not, and so had wrong of me.

OLD SERVANT

And in what hope didst thou cast forth the babe ?

CREUSA

That the God yet would save him—his own child.

OLD SERVANT

Ah me, what tempest wrecks thine house's weal !

CREUSA

Why dost thou, ancient, veil thine head, and weep ?

OLD SERVANT

Seeing calamity, thy sire's and thine.

CREUSA

'Tis man's lot : naught continueth at one stay.

OLD SERVANT

Cling we no more to wailings, daughter, now.

970

CREUSA

What must I do ?—so helpless misery is.

OLD SERVANT

Avenge thee on the God who wronged thee first.

CREUSA

How ?—I, a mortal, triumph o'er the strong ?

OLD SERVANT

Set thou the torch to Loxias' holy shrine.

CREUSA

I fear :—even now I have enough of woes.

OLD SERVANT

Then dare the thing thou canst : thine husband slay.

CREUSA

I cannot—for old love and loyalty's sake.

OLD SERVANT

The boy, at least, thus foisted upon thee.

ΙΩΝ

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

πῶς ; εἰ γὰρ εἶη δυνατόν· ὥς θέλοιμί γ' ἄν.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

980 ξιφηφόρους σοὺς ὀπλίσασ' ὀπάοντας.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

στείχοιμ' ἄν· ἀλλὰ ποῦ γενήσεται τόδε ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἱεραῖσιν ἐν σκηναῖσιν, οὐ θοινᾷ φίλους.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἐπίσημον ὁ φόνος, καὶ τὸ δοῦλον ἀσθενές.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ᾧμοι, κακίζει. φέρε, σύ νυν βούλευέ τι.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

καὶ μὴν ἔχω γε δόλια καὶ δραστήρια.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἀμφοῖν ἂν εἶην τοῖνδ' ὑπηρέτης ἐγώ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἄκουε τοίνυν· οἶσθα γηγενῇ μάχην ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οἶδ', ἦν Φλέγρα Γίγαντες ἔστησαν θεοῖς.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἐνταῦθα Γοργόν' ἔτεκε Γῆ, δεινὸν τέρας.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

990 ἦ παισὶν αὐτῆς σύμμαχον, θεῶν πόνον ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ναί· καὶ νιν ἔκτειν' ἡ Διὸς Παλλὰς θεά.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἄρ' οὗτός ἐσθ' ὁ μῦθος δν κλύω πάλαι ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ταύτης Ἀθάνα δέρος ἐπὶ στέρνοις ἔχει.

ION

CREUSA

How?—would 'twere possible!—how fain would I!

OLD SERVANT

With daggers arm the servants of thy train. 980

CREUSA

I will go straight:—but when to strike the blow?

OLD SERVANT

In the pavilion, where he feasts his friends.

CREUSA

Murder in public—and by weakling thralls!

OLD SERVANT

Woe! thine heart fails. Do thine own plotting now.

CREUSA

Ha, mine is secret guile and triumph sure.

OLD SERVANT

Yea, both?—then will I be thy minister.

CREUSA

Hear then:—thou knowest of the Earth-born War?

OLD SERVANT

Yea, giants stood in Phlegra 'gainst the Gods.

CREUSA

There Earth brought forth the Gorgon, monster
dread—

OLD SERVANT

To help her sons, and press the Gods full hard? 990

CREUSA

Yea, and Zeus' Daughter, Goddess Pallas, slew it.

OLD SERVANT

Meseems I heard this legend long ago—

CREUSA

How on her breast Athena bore its skin.

ΙΩΝ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἦν αἰγίδ' ὀνομάζουσι, Παλλάδος στολήν ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τόδ' ἔσχεν ὄνομα θεῶν ὅτ' ἦξεν εἰς δόρυ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ποιόν τι μορφῆς σχῆμ' ἔχουσαν ἀγρίας ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

θώρακ' ἐχίδνης περιβόλοις ὀπλισμένον.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τί δῆτα, θύγατερ, τοῦτο σοῖς ἐχθροῖς βλάβος ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

Ἐριχθόνιον οἶσθ' ἦ οὐ ; τί δ' οὐ μέλλεις, γέρον ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

1000 ὃν πρῶτον ὑμῶν πρόγονον ἐξανῆκε γῆ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τούτῳ δίδωσι Παλλὰς ὄντι νεογόνῳ—

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τί χρῆμα ; μέλλον γάρ τι προσφέρεις ἔπος.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

δισσοὺς σταλαγμοὺς αἵματος Γοργοῦς ἄπο.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἰσχὺν ἔχοντας τίνα πρὸς ἀνθρώπου φύσιν ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τὸν μὲν θανάσιμον, τὸν δ' ἀκεσφόρον νόσων.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ἐν τῷ καθάψας' ἀμφὶ παιδὶ σώματος ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

χρυσοῖσι δεσμοῖς· ὃ δὲ δίδωσ' ἐμῷ πατρί.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

κείνου δὲ κατθανόντος εἰς σ' ἀφίκετο ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ναί· καπλὶ καρπῷ γ' αὐτ' ἐγὼ χερὸς φέρω.

ION

OLD SERVANT

Ay, named the Aegis, Pallas's array ?

CREUSA

Of Gods named, from her battle-eager charge.

OLD SERVANT

What was the fashion of its grisly form ?

CREUSA

A breastplate fenced with ring on ring of snakes.

OLD SERVANT

But, daughter, how shall this thing harm thy foes ?

CREUSA

Knowest thou Erichthonius ?—thou must.

OLD SERVANT

First father of your line, whom earth brought forth ? 1000

CREUSA

To him gave Pallas in his hour of birth—

OLD SERVANT

What ?—thy word falters in the utterance.

CREUSA

Two drops of blood—of that same Gorgon's blood.

OLD SERVANT

What power have they upon the life of man ?

CREUSA

For death one, one for healing of disease.

OLD SERVANT

And hung them on the child—wherein enclosed ?

CREUSA

A golden clasp. He gave it to my sire.

OLD SERVANT

And, when Erechtheus died, to thee it passed ?

CREUSA

Yea ; and I bear it ever on my wrist.

ΙΩΝ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

1010 πῶς οὖν κέκρανται δίπτυχον δῶρον θεᾶς ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

κοίλης μὲν ὅστις φλεβὸς ἀπέσταξεν φόνῳ—

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τί τῷδε χρῆσθαι ; δύνασιν ἐκφέρει τίνα ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

νόσους ἀπείργει καὶ τροφὰς ἔχει βίου.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὁ δεύτερος δ' ἀριθμὸς ὃν λέγεις τί δρᾷ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

κτείνει, δρακόντων ἰὸς ὢν τῶν Γοργόνος.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

εἰς ἐν δὲ κραθέντ' αὐτὸν ἢ χωρὶς φορεῖς ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

χωρὶς· κακῷ γὰρ ἐσθλὸν οὐ συμμίσγνυται.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὦ φιλτάτη παῖ, πάντ' ἔχεις ὅσων σε δεῖ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τούτῳ θανεῖται παῖς· σὺ δ' ὁ κτείνων ἔσει.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

1020 ποῦ καὶ τί δράσας ; σὸν λέγειν, τολμᾶν δ' ἐμόν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἐν ταῖς Ἀθήναις, δῶμ' ὅταν τοῦμὸν μόλῃ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὐκ εὖ τόδ' εἶπας· καὶ σὺ γὰρ τοῦμὸν ψέγεις.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

πῶς ; ἄρ' ὑπείδου τοῦθ' ὃ καὶ μ' ἐσέρχεται ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

σὺ παῖδα δόξεις διολέσαι, κεῖ μὴ κτενεῖς.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὀρθῶς· φθονεῖν γάρ φασι μητρὶα τέκνοις.

ION

OLD SERVANT

How is the Goddess' gift twofold ordained ? 1010

CREUSA

Each drop that welled in death from the *hollow vein*—

OLD SERVANT

To what serves this ? ' What virtue beareth it ?

CREUSA

Averts diseases, fostereth the life.

OLD SERVANT

The second thou hast named—what doeth it ?

CREUSA

Slayeth : 'tis venom of the Gorgon's snakes.

OLD SERVANT

Mingled in one, or several, dost thou bear it ?

CREUSA

Several : good with evil blendeth not.

OLD SERVANT

O child, O dearest, thou hast all thy need !

CREUSA

Hereby the lad shall die, the slayer thou.

OLD SERVANT

Where ?—by what deed ? ' Thou tell, and I will dare. 1020

CREUSA

In Athens, when he cometh to mine home.

OLD SERVANT

Ill rede is thine—as mine was in thy sight.

CREUSA

Ha, doth thine heart's misgiving jump with mine ?

OLD SERVANT

Thou shouldst be murderess held, though innocent.

CREUSA

Even so—the old tale of stepdame's jealousy.

ΙΩΝ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

αὐτοῦ νυν αὐτὸν κτεῖν', ἵν' ἀρνήσει φόνους.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

προλάζυμαι γοῦν τῷ χρόνῳ τῆς ἡδονῆς.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

καὶ σὸν γε λήσεις πόσιν ἃ σε σπεύδει λαθεῖν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

1030

οἶσθ' οὖν ὃ δρᾶσον ; χειρὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς λαβὼν
 χρύσωμ' Ἀθάνας τόδε, παλαιὸν ὄργανον,
 ἐλθὼν ἵν' ἡμῖν βουθυτεῖ λάθρα ποσὶς,
 δείπνων ὅταν λήγῃσι καὶ σπονδὰς θεοῖς
 μέλλωσι λείβειν, ἐν πέπλοις ἔχων τόδε
 κάθες βαλὼν εἰς πῶμα τῷ νεανία,
 ἰδία δέ, μή τι πᾶσι, χωρίσας ποτὸν
 τῷ τῶν ἐμῶν μέλλοντι δεσπόζειν δόμων.
 κἄνπερ διέλθῃ λαιμόν, οὔποθ' ἴξεται
 κλεινὰς Ἀθήνας, κατθανὼν δ' αὐτοῦ μενεῖ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

1040

σὺ μὲν νυν εἴσω προξένων μέθες πόδα·
 ἡμεῖς δ' ἐφ' ᾧ τετάγμεθ' ἐκπονήσομεν.
 ἄγ', ὦ γεραιέ πούς, νεανίας γενοῦ
 ἔργοισι, κεῖ μὴ τῷ χρόνῳ πάρεστί σοι.
 ἐχθρὸν δ' ἐπ' ἄνδρα στείχε δεσποτῶν μέτα,
 καὶ συμφόνευσεν καὶ συνεξαίρει δόμων.
 τὴν δ' εὐσέβειαν εὐτυχοῦσι μὲν καλὸν
 τιμᾶν· ὅταν δὲ πολεμίους δρᾶσαι κακῶς
 θέλῃ τις, οὐδεὶς ἐμποδὼν κεῖται νόμος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Εἰνοδία θύγατερ Δάματρος, ἃ τῶν στρ. α'
 νυκτιπόλων ἐφόδων ἀνάσσεις,

ION

OLD SERVANT

Here slay him, then : so shall avail denial.

CREUSA

At least I shall the sooner taste that joy.

OLD SERVANT

Nor thy lord know thy knowledge of his secret.

CREUSA

Know'st then thy part ? Receive thou from mine hand
Athena's golden vial, wrought of old.

1030

Go where my lord holds this false sacrifice ;
And, in the banquet's pause, when men will pour
Wine to the Gods, this have thou 'neath thy cloak,
And swiftly drop into the stripling's cup,—
That for his drinking, not the general bowl,—
Even his who seeks to lord it o'er mine house.
If once it pass his lips, ne'er shall he come
To glorious Athens : here shall he stay—dead.

OLD SERVANT

Unto thine host's house now withdraw thy foot ;
And I through mine appointed task will toil.
Come, agèd foot, for deeds must thou grow young,
Though this be not by time vouchsafed to thee.
On, with thy mistress on, against the foe !
Help her to slay and cast him forth her home.
Fair faith ?—O yea, fair faith for fortune fair :
But, when ye would wreak vengeance on your foes,
There is no law that lieth in the path.

1040

[*Exeunt* CREUSA and OLD SERVANT.]

CHORUS

(*Str.* 1)

Goddess of Highways, Demeter's Daughter,¹
Queen of the nightmare darkness-ranger,

¹ Hekate, goddess of sorcery and secret poisoning. She haunted places where roads crossed each other, and at night sent up demons and phantoms from Hades.

- 1050 καὶ μεθαμερίων ὄδωσον δυσθανάτων
 κρατήρων πληρώματ', ἐφ' οἷσι πέμπει
 πότνια πότνι' ἐμὰ χθονίας
 Γοργοῦς λαιμοτόμων ἀπὸ σταλαγμῶν
 τῶ τῶν Ἐρεχθεϊδᾶν
 δόμων ἐφαπτομένω·
 μηδέ ποτ' ἄλλος ἄλλων ἀπ' οἴκων
 πόλεως ἀνάσσοι
- 1060 πλὴν τῶν εὐγενετᾶν Ἐρεχθεϊδᾶν.

εἰ δ' ἀτελὴς θάνατος σπουδαί τε δεσποί- ἀντ. α'
 νας, ὃ τε καιρὸς ἄπεισι τόλμας,
 ἃ τε νῦν φέρετ' ἐλπίς, ἣ θηκτὸν ξίφος ἣ
 λαιμῶν¹ ἐξάψει βρόχον ἀμφὶ δειρήν,
 πάθεισι πάθεα δ' ἐξανύτους
 εἰς ἄλλας βιότου κάτεισι μορφάς.
 οὐ γὰρ δόμων γ' ἐτέρους

1070 ἄρχοντας ἄλλοδαπούς
 ζῶσά ποτ' ὁμμάτων ἐν φαενναῖς
 ἀνέχοιτ' ἂν αὐγαῖς
 ἅ τῶν εὐπατριδᾶν γεγῶσ' οἴκων.

αἰσχύνομαι τὸν πολὺνμνον στρ. β'
 θεόν, εἰ παρὰ καλλιχόροισι παγαῖς
 λαμπάδα θεωρὸν εἰκάδων

¹ Scaliger : for MSS. δαίμων.

ION

Guide thou the hand that for noontide slaughter 1050
 Shall fill up the chalice, my lady's avenger,
 Which beareth the venom-gouts that fell
 From the neck of the Gorgon, the fiend of hell,
 My lady's greeting-gift to the stranger
 That usurpeth Erechtheus' royal sway,
 That an alien of alien strain in our Athens never
 may reign,
 But the noble Erechtheids—none save they! 1060
(Ant. 1)
 But—the death unaccomplished?—the deed un-
 abetted
 Of the hour, and my mistress's purposes ended,
 And the hopes that upbore her?—remains the
 sword whetted; [pended;
 Remaineth the neck in the death-noose sus-
 And, by agony ending the agony-strife,
 Shall she pass to the life beyond this life.
 For never this queen from kings descended
 Shall endure that the splendour-light of her 1070
 eyne, [the ancient hall
 No, not while she liveth, should fall on the shame of
 Ruled by the upstart of alien line.

Shame for the God oft-chanted ¹ (Str. 2)
 In hymns, if *he*,²
 Beside the fountains haunted
 Of dances, see

¹ Dionysus, worshipped in the Eleusinian Mysteries with Demeter and Persephone. The 20th of Boëdromion was ushered in by a vast torch-light procession in which those newly initiated, who had kept vigil in the temple, joined.

² Ion, whose presence, as that of an alien by blood, would be profanation, yet whose initiation could, as a matter of policy, not be avoided.

ΙΩΝ

ὄψεται ἐννύχιος ἄνπνος ὦν,
 ὅτε καὶ Διὸς ἀστερωπὸς
 ἀνέχόρευσεν αἰθήρ,
 1080 χορεύει δὲ σελάνα
 καὶ πεντήκοντα κόραι
 Νηρέος, αἱ κατὰ πόντον
 αἰνάων τε ποταμῶν
 δίνας χορευόμεναι,
 τὰν χρυσοστέφανον κόραν
 καὶ ματέρα σεμνάν·
 ἵν' ἐλπίζει βασιλεύσειν
 ἄλλων πόνον εἰσπεσὼν
 ὁ Φοίβειος ἀλάτας.

1090 ὁράθ' ὅσοι δυσκελάδοισιν ἀντ. β
 κατὰ μούσαν ἰόντες αἰείδεθ' ὕμνοις
 ἀμέτερα λέχεα καὶ γάμους
 Κύπριδος ἀθεμίτους ἀνοσίους,
 ὅσον εὐσεβία κρατοῦμεν
 ἄδικον ἄροτον ἀνδρῶν.
 παλίμφamos αἰοιδὰ
 καὶ μούσ' εἰς ἄνδρας ἴτω
 δυσκέλαδος ἀμφὶ λέκτρων,

ION

With eyes long held from sleep
That Twentieth Dawn upleap,
See the torch-river's sweep, ere darkness flee,

When dances heaven star-glancing

Adoringly,

When the white moon is dancing,

1080

And 'neath the sea .

The Nereids' dance enrings

The eternal river-springs,

And their full chorus sings Persephone

Gold-crowned, and our Earth-mother—

Awful is she !—

Shall *he* press in, that other,

To sovranty ?

Shall not his hopes be foiled ?—

Where kings and heroes toiled, [fee ?

Shall that proud realm be spoiled, a vagrant's

Mark—ye whose strains of slander (Ant. 2) 1090

Scourge evermore

Woman in song, and brand her

Wanton and whore,—

How high in virtue's place

We pass men's lawless race,

Nor spit in viper-lays your venom-store ;

But let the Muse of taunting

On men's heads pour

Her indignation, chanting

Her treason-lore ;

· Sing of the outraged maid ;

Tell of the wife betrayed

By him who hath displayed his false heart's

core,—

1100 δείκνυσι γὰρ ὁ Διὸς ἐκ
παίδων ἀμνημοσύναν,
οὐ κοινὰν τεκέων τύχαν
οἴκοισι φυτεύσας
δεσποίνα· πρὸς δ' Ἀφροδίταν
ἄλλαν θέμενος χάριν
νόθου παιδὸς ἔκνυρσεν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ ΚΡΕΟΥΣΗΣ

κλεινὴν, γυναῖκες, ποῦ κόρην Ἐρεχθέως
δέσποιναν εὖρω ; πανταχῇ γὰρ ἄστεως
ζητῶν νιν ἐξέπλησα κούκ ἔχω λαβεῖν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1110 τί δ' ἔστιν, ὦ ξύνδουλε ; τίς προθυμία
ποδῶν ἔχει σε, καὶ λόγους τίνας φέρεις ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ ΚΡΕΟΥΣΗΣ

θηρώμεθ'· ἀρχαὶ δ' ἀπιχώριοι χθονὸς
ζητοῦσιν αὐτὴν, ὡς θάνῃ πετρουμένη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οἶμοι, τί λέξεις ; οὔτι που λελήμμεθα
κρυφαῖον εἰς παῖδ' ἐκπορίζουσαι φόνον ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ ΚΡΕΟΥΣΗΣ

ἔγνωσ' μεθέξεις δ' οὐκ ἐν ὑστάτοις κακοῦ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὥφθη δὲ πῶς τὰ κρυπτὰ μηχανήματα ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ ΚΡΕΟΥΣΗΣ

τὸ μὴ δίκαιον τῆς δίκης ἡσώμενον
ἐξηῦρεν ὁ θεός, οὐ μανθῆναι θέλων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1120 πῶς ; ἀντιάζω σ' ἱκέτις ἐξειπεῖν τάδε.
πεπυσμέναι γὰρ εἰ θανεῖν ἡμᾶς χρεῶν,
ἥδιον ἂν θάνοιμεν, εἴθ' ὅρᾳν φάος.

ION

This son of Zeus,¹ who flouted
 A queen's heart, sore
 With childless hunger, scouted
 Troth-plight of yore :
 Her right aside he thrust,
 And mocked a nation's trust
 For one that to his lust this bastard bore !

Enter SERVANT in haste.

SERVANT

Where, damsels, shall I light upon our mistress,
 Erechtheus' daughter? All throughout the town
 Seeking her have I ranged, and find her not.

CHORUS

What is it, fellow-thrall? What hot-foot haste
 Possesseth thee? What tidings bearest thou?

SERVANT

We are hunted! Yea, the rulers of the land
 Are seeking her, that she may die by stoning.

CHORUS

Ah me! what say'st thou? Are we taken then
 Plotting the secret murder of yon lad?

SERVANT

Yea, thou wilt share the doom—nor thou the last.

CHORUS

How were the hidden stratagems laid bare?

SERVANT

The essay of right to vanquish wrong the God
 Discovered, lest his temple be defiled.

CHORUS

How?—suppliant I beseech thee, tell it out.
 For, knowing all, if I indeed must die,
 Death should be easier—yea, or sweeter life.

¹ Xuthus, descended through Aeolus from Zeus.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ ΚΡΕΟΤΣΗΣ

- ἐπεὶ θεοῦ μαντεῖον ὥχετ' ἐκλιπὼν
 πόσις Κρεούσης, παῖδα τὸν καινὸν λαβὼν
 πρὸς δεῖπνα θυσίας θ' ἅς θεοῖς ὠπλίζετο,
 Ξοῦθος μὲν ὥχετ' ἔνθα πῦρ πηδᾶ θεοῦ
 βακχεῖον, ὡς σφαγαῖσι Διονύσου πέτρας
 δεύσειε δισσὰς παιδὸς ἀντ' ὀπτηρίων,
 λέξας· σὺ μὲν νῦν, τέκνον, ἀμφήρεις μένων
 σκηναὶς ἀνίστη τεκτόνων μοχθήμασιν.
 1130 θύσας δὲ γενέταις θεοῖσιν ἦν μακρὸν χρόνον
 μένω, παροῦσι δαῖτες ἔστωσαν φίλοις.
 λαβὼν δὲ μύσχους ὥχεθ'· ὁ δὲ νεανίας
 σεμνῶς ἀτοίχους περιβολὰς σκηνωμάτων
 ὀρθοστάταις ἰδρύεθ', ἡλίου βολὰς
 καλῶς φυλάξας, οὔτε πρὸς μέσας φλογὸς
 ἀκτίνας, οὔτ' αὖ πρὸς τελευτώσας βίον,
 πλέθρου σταθμήσας μῆκος εἰς εὐγωνίαν,
 μέτρημ' ἔχουσιν τοῦν μέσῳ γε μυρίων
 ποδῶν ἀριθμόν, ὡς λέγουσιν οἱ σοφοί,
 1140 ὡς πάντα Δελφῶν λαὸν εἰς θοίκην καλῶν.
 λαβὼν δ' ὑφάσμαθ' ἱερὰ θησαυρῶν πάρα
 κατεσκίαζε, θαύματ' ἀνθρώποις ὄραν.
 πρῶτον μὲν ὀρόφῳ πτέρυγα περιβάλλει πέπλων
 ἀνάθημα Δίου παιδός, οὗς Ἑρακλῆς
 Ἀμαζόνων σκυλεύματ' ἤνεγκεν θεῷ.
 ἐνῆν δ' ὑφάνται γράμμασιν τοιαῖδ' ὑφαί·
 Οὐρανὸς ἀθροίζων ἀστρ' ἐν αἰθέρος κύκλῳ
 ἵππους μὲν ἤλαν' εἰς τελευταίαν φλόγα
 Ἥλιος, ἐφέλκων λαμπρὸν Ἑσπέρου φάος.
 1150 μελάμπεπλος δὲ Νύξ ἀσειρώτον ζυγοῖς
 ὄχημ' ἔπαλλεν· ἄστρα δ' ὠμάρτει θεᾷ.
 Πλειὰς μὲν ἦει μεσοπόρου δι' αἰθέρος,

ION

SERVANT

Soon as Creusa's lord had left the fane
Of Phoebus, taking his new son with him
For that thanksgiving-feast and sacrifice,
Xuthus went up to where the Wine-god's fire
Leaps heavenward, to make wet with victims' blood
Dionysus' twin rocks for the son new-found ;
And spake, " Abide now, son, and set thou up
A wide-embracing tent by craftsmen's toil.
If, sacrificing to the Birth-gods, long
I tarry, feast thy friends assembled there." 1130

So took the calves and went. And now the youth
The unwall'd pavilion's compass solemnly
With tall masts reared, with good heed lest the sun
Should dart therein his shafts of midnoon-flame;
Or the slant javelin-gleams of dying day.
A hundred feet he meted out foursquare,—
Having for compass of its space within
Ten thousand, as the cunning craftsmen say,—
As bidding to the feast all Delphi's folk. 1140
With sacred tapestries from the treasures
He screened it, marvellous for men to see.
First with a canopy of shawls he ceiled it,
The offering of Zeus' son, which Hercules
Brought to the God, the Amazonian spoils.

Therein were webs of woven blazonry :—
Heaven shepherding his stars in folds of air :
His steeds the Sun drave to their goal of fire,
After him drawing the bright Evening Star.
And sable-vestured Night with team of twain 1150
Upfloated ; and the stars companioned her.
The Pleiad swam her mid-sky path along,

- ὃ τε ξιφήρης Ὀρίων· ὕπερθε δὲ
 Ἄρκτος στρέφουσ' οὐραῖα χρυσήρει πόλῳ.
 κύκλος δὲ πανσέληνος ἠκόντιζ' ἄνω
 μηνὸς διχήρης, Ἱάδες τε ναυτίλοις
 σαφέστατον σημείον, ἣ τε φωσφόρος
 Ἔως διώκουσ' ἄστροι· τοίχοισιν δ' ἔπι
 ἤμπισχεν ἄλλα βαρβάρων ὑφάσματα,
 1160 εὐηρέτους ναῦς ἀντίας Ἑλληνίσιν,
 καὶ μίξοθηρας φώτας, ἱππείας τ' ἄγρας,
 ἐλάφῳ λεόντων τ' ἀγρίων θηράματα.
 κατ' εἰσόδους δὲ Κέκροπα θυγατέρων πέλας
 σπείραισιν εἰλίσσοντ', Ἀθηναίων τινὸς
 ἀνάθημα· χρυσεύς τ' ἐν μέσῳ συσσιτίῳ
 κρατήρας ἔστησ'. ἐν δ' ἄκροισι βὰς ποσὶ
 κήρυξ ἀνείπε τὸν θέλοντ' ἐγχωρίων
 ἐς δαῖτα χωρεῖν. ὥς δ' ἐπληρώθη στέγη,
 στεφάνοισι κοσμηθέντες εὐόχθου βορᾶς
 1170 ψυχὴν ἐπλήρουν. ὥς δ' ἀνείσαν ἡδονήν,
 σκηνῆς¹ παρελθὼν πρέσβυς εἰς μέσον πέδον
 ἔστη, γέλων δ' ἔθηκε συνδείπνοις πολύν,
 πρόθυμα πρᾶσσω· ἔκ τε γὰρ κρῶσσῶν ὕδωρ
 χεροῖν ἔπεμπε νίπτρα, κάζεθυμία
 σμύρνης ἰδρώτα, χρυσεῶν τ' ἐκπωμάτων
 ἦρχ', αὐτὸς αὐτῷ τόνδε προστάξας πόνον.
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἐς αὐλοὺς ἦκον ἐς κρατήρά τε
 κοινόν, γέρων ἔλεξ'. ἀφαρπάζειν χρεὼν
 οἶνηρά τεύχη σμικρά, μεγάλα δ' εἰσφέρειν,
 1180 ὥς θάσσον ἔλθωσ' οἷδ' ἐς ἡδονὰς φρενῶν.
 ἦν δὴ φερόντων μόχθος ἀργυρηλάτους
 χρυσεᾶς τε φιάλας· ὁ δὲ λαβὼν ἐξαίρετον,
 ὥς τῷ νέῳ δὴ δεσπότη χάριν φέρων,

¹ Barnes : to supply lacuna in MSS.

ION

And sword-begirt Orion ; and, above, [sphere.
 The Bear's tail wheeled around the gold-gemmed
 The Moon's full circle of the parted month
 Shot silver shafts : the Hyads, surest sign
 To shipmen ; and the Light-uplifter, Dawn,
 Chasing the star-rout. And upon the walls
 Draped lie yet other orient tapestries :
 Galleys with oars that charged on ships of Greece, 1160
 Monsters half-brute, steeds flying in the chase,
 Huntings of stags and lions of the wold.
 At the doors Cecrops coiling spire on spire
 Amidst his daughters—some Athenian's gift
 Of worship. In the banquet's midst he set
 The golden bowls. Forth stately pacing then
 A herald cried, " What Delphian will soe'er,
 Come to the feast !" And when the tent was
 thronged,
 With garlands crowned they satisfied their souls
 With plenteous meat. And when they would no more, 1170
 An old man entered in, and in their midst
 Stood, and his busy zeal oft stirred to mirth
 The banqueters. He drew from drinking-ewers
 Water for cleansing hands ; for incense burnt
 Balsam of myrrh, and of the golden cups
 Took charge—yea, laid this office on himself.
 But when the flutes 'gan play, and mazer-bowls
 Were mixed, the greybeard spake, " Take hence
 forthright
 These tiny wine-cups—ample beakers bring,
 That my lords' hearts the sooner may be merry." 1180
 Then toiled we bearing goblets silver-chased
 And golden ; and he took a chosen one,
 As rendering worship to his new-made lord,

- ἔδωκε πλήρες τεῦχος, εἰς οἶνον βαλὼν
 ὃ φασι δοῦναι φάρμακον δραστήριον
 δέσποιναν, ὡς παῖς ὁ νέος ἐκλίποι φάος·
 κούδεις τὰδ' ἦδριν ἐν χεροῖν ἔχοντι δὲ
 σπονδὰς μετ' ἄλλων παιδὶ τῷ πεφηνότι
 βλασφημίαν τις οἰκετῶν ἐφθέγγετο·
 1190 ὁ δ', ὡς ἐν ἱερῷ μάντεσιν τ' ἐσθλοῖς τραφεῖς,
 οἰωνὸν ἔθετο, κακέλευσ' ἄλλον νέον
 κρατῆρα πλεροῦν· τὰς δὲ πρὶν σπονδὰς θεοῦ
 δίδωσι γαῖα, πᾶσί τ' ἐκσπένδειν λέγει.
 σιγῇ δ' ὑπήλθεν. ἐκ δ' ἐπίμπλαμεν δρόσου
 κρατῆρας ἱεροῦς Βυβλίνου τε πώματος.
 κὰν τῷδε μόχθῳ πτηνὸς εἰσπίπτει δόμους
 κῶμος πελειῶν· Λοξίου γὰρ ἐν δόμοις
 ἄτρεστα ναίουσ'· ὡς δ' ἀπέσπεισαν μέθυ,
 1200 εἰς αὐτὸ χεῖλη πώματος κεχρημέναι
 καθεΐσαν, εἰλκον δ' εὐπτέρους ἐς αὐχένας.
 καὶ ταῖς μὲν ἄλλαις ἄνοσος ἦν λοιβὴ θεοῦ·
 ἥ δ' ἔξετ' ἔνθ' ὁ καινὸς ἔσπεισεν γόνος,
 ποτοῦ τ' ἐγεύσατ', εὐθὺς εὐπτερον δέμας
 ἔσεισε κάβάκχευσεν, ἐκ δ' ἔκλαγξ' ὅπα
 ἀξύνετον αἰάζουσ'· ἐθάμβησεν δὲ πᾶς
 θοινατόρων ὄμιλος ὄρνιθος πόνους·
 θνήσκει δ' ὑπασπαίρουσα, φοινικοσκελεῖς
 χηλὰς παρεῖσα. γυμνὰ δ' ἐκ πέπλων μέλη
 1210 ὑπὲρ τραπέζης ἦχ' ὁ μαντευτὸς γόνος,
 βοᾷ δέ· τίς μ' ἔμελλεν ἀνθρώπων κτανεῖν ;
 σήμαινε, πρέσβυ· σὴ γὰρ ἡ προθυμία,
 καὶ πῶμα χειρὸς σῆς ἐδεξάμην πάρα.
 εὐθὺς δ' ἐρευνᾷ γραΐαν ὠλένην λαβὼν,
 ἐπ' αὐτοφώρῳ πρέσβυν ὡς ἔχονθ' ἔλοι.

ION

And gave the chalice brimmed, first casting in
 The drug death-working, which our mistress gave,
 Men say, that her new son might leave the light.
 None marked;—but as the god-discovered heir
 Raised with the rest the God's cup in his hand,
 He heard some seryant speak a word unmeet.
 He, temple-reared, perfect in bodement-lore, 1190
 Held it for ominous, bade fill up with wine
 Another bowl; that first drink-offering
 He cast to earth, and bade all do the like.
 Then fell a hush. With water brimmed we up
 And Bybline wine the sacred mixing-bowls.

Then midst our toils a flight of doves dropt down
 In the pavilion; for in Loxias' halls
 Unfrayed they dwell, and when men spilled the
 wine,
 The thirsty innocents dipped their beaks therein, 1200
 And drew it down their dainty-feathered throats.
 And none the God's libation harmed—save one,
 Which lighted where the new heir spilled the wine.
 She sipped the drink—her dainty-feathered frame
 Quivered and staggered: an unmeaning scream¹
 She shrilled of anguish: marvelled all the throng
 Of banqueters to see her agonies.
 One fierce convulsion—the pink claws uncramped;
 And she was dead. That child of prophecy
 Bared of his cloak his limbs, leapt o'er the board,
 Shouting “Who goeth about to murder me? 1210
 Old man, declare!—thine was the eager zeal,—
 Yea, from thine hand did I receive the cup!”
 He clutched his withered arm, he searched him o'er
 To take the ancient in the very fact.

¹ The ordinary note of the bird was significant in augury.

ᾧφθη δὲ καὶ κατεῖπ' ἀναγκασθεὶς μόγις
 τόλμας Κρεούσης πώματός τε μηχανάς.
 θεὸν δ' εὐθύς ἔξω συλλαβὼν θοινάτορας
 ὁ πυθόχρηστος Λοξίου νεανίας,
 1220 καὶν κοιράνοισι Πυθικοῖς σταθεὶς λέγει·
 ὦ γαῖα σεμνή, τῆς Ἑρεχθέως ὑπο
 ξένης γυναικὸς φαρμάκοισι θνήσκομεν.
 Δελφῶν δ' ἄνακτες ὥρισαν πετρορριφῇ
 θανεῖν ἐμὴν δέσποιναν οὐ ψήφῳ μιᾷ,
 τὸν ἱερὸν ὡς κτείνουσαν ἔν τ' ἀνακτόροις
 φόνον τιθεῖσαν. πᾶσα δὲ ζητεῖ πόλις
 τὴν ἀθλίως σπεύσασαν ἀθλίαν ὁδὸν·
 παίδων γὰρ ἐλθοῦς' εἰς ἔρον Φοῖβον πάρα,
 τὸ σῶμα κοινῇ τοῖς τέκνοις ἀπώλεσεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστ' οὐκ ἔστιν θανάτου
 1230 παρατροπὰ μελέα μοι·
 φανερά γὰρ φανερά τάδ' ἤδη
 σπονδᾶς ἐκ Διονύσου
 βοτρυῶν θοᾶς ἐχίδνας
 σταγόσι μιγνυμένας φόνῳ,
 φανερά θύματα νερτέρων,
 συμφοραὶ μὲν ἐμῷ βίῳ,
 λεύσιμοι δὲ καταφθοραὶ δεσποίνα.
 τίνα φυγὰν πτερόεσσαν ἢ
 1240 χθονὸς ὑπὸ σκοτίων μυχῶν
 πορευθῶ, θανάτου λεύσιμον ἄταν
 ἀποφεύγουσα, τεθρίππων
 ὠκίσταν χαλὰν ἐπιβάσ',
 ἢ πρύμνας ἐπὶ ναῶν ;
 οὐκ ἔστι λαθεῖν, ὅτε μὴ χρήζων
 θεὸς ἐκκλέπτει.

ION

Detected, tortured, scarce even then he told
Creusa's desperate deed, the poison-plot.
Straightway, the feasters with him, hurries forth
The stripling given by Loxias' oracle,
Before the Pythian nobles stands, and cries,
"O hallowed land, by poison is my death 1220
Sought of Erechtheus' child, the alien dame!"
Then Delphi's lords by general vote decreed
That from the precipice hurled my queen should die,
As compassing a priest's death, planning murder
Within the precinct. All the city seeks her
Who sped on wretched mission wretchedly.
Drawn by desire of babes to Phoebus' fane,
She hath lost her life and children therewithal.

CHORUS

There is no hiding-place from death for me,
None: woe is me, it is the end! 1230
All is laid bare for all men's eyes to see—
The cup, the murder-blend
Of gouts of viper-blood swift for life's quelling,
Mid Bacchus' clusters shed;
Drink-offering—yea, to them in darkness dwelling,
Gods of the dead.

Ruin is my life's portion—ah, *her* doom!
Stones raining death upon my queen!
Oh had I wings, or could but plunge to gloom
Under the earth, to screen
Mine head from horror of the stones down-beating!
Oh, borne on four-horsed car, 1240
To hear the hurrying hoofs!—to see waves fleeting
Astern afar!

There is no hope,—except a God befriending
Should snatch us from men's sight.

ΙΩΝ

τί ποτ', ὦ μελέα δέσποινα, μένει
ψυχῇ σε παθεῖν ; ἄρα θέλουσαι
δραῖσαι τι κακὸν τοὺς πέλας αὐταὶ
πεισόμεθ', ὥσπερ τὸ δίκαιον ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ .

1250 πρόσπολοι, διωκόμεσθα θανασίμους ἐπὶ σφαγάς,
Πυθίᾳ ψήφῳ κρατηθεῖς, ἔκδοτος δὲ γίγνομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἴσμεν, ὦ τάλαινα, τὰς σὰς συμφοράς, ἵν' εἰ
τύχης.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ποῖ φύγω δῆτ' ; ἐκ γὰρ οἴκων προύλαβον μόγισ
πόδα,
μὴ θανεῖν· κλοπῇ δ' ἀφίγμαι διαφυγοῦσα πολε-
μίους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ποῖ δ' ἂν ἄλλοσ' ἢ 'πὶ βωμόν ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

καὶ τί μοι πλέον τόδε ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰκέτιν οὐ θέμις φονεύειν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τῷ νόμῳ δέ γ' ὄλλυμαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

χειρία γ' ὑλοῦσα.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

καὶ μὴν οἶδ' ἀγωνισταὶ πικροὶ
δεῦρ' ἐπείγονται ξιφῆρεις.

ION

O hapless queen, upon thy life what ending
Of agony shall light!
O God! is justice' sword on *us* descending,
Who thought to smite?

Enter CREUSA in haste.

CREUSA

Maidens, I am chased: the blood-hounds are upon
my track to slay; 1250
For the Pythian vote hath doomed me, given me up
to be their prey!

CHORUS

Hapless queen, we know it, know the ruin over-
shadowing thee.

CREUSA

Whither fly? What refuge? Scarce from forth the
house my feet could flee
Ere the death rushed in. Through throngs of foe-
men slipt I stealthily.

CHORUS

What thy refuge save the altar?

CREUSA

How shall this avail my need?

CHORUS

Impious 'tis to slay the suppliant.

CREUSA

Yet the law my death decreed.

CHORUS

Ay, but first their hands must hold thee.

CREUSA

Lo, the swords!—they come, the feet
Of the ministers of death!

ΙΩΝ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἴξε νυν πυρᾶς ἔπι.

ἦν θάνης γὰρ ἐνθάδ' οὔσα, τοῖς ἀποκτείναςί σε
1260 προστρόπαιον αἶμα θήσεις· οἰστέον δὲ τὴν τύχην.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ ταυρόμορφον ὄμμα Κηφισοῦ πατρός,
οἶαν ἔχιδναν τήνδ' ἔφυσας ἢ πυρὸς
δράκοντ' ἀναβλέποντα φοινίαν φλόγα,
ἦ τόλμα πᾶσ' ἔνεστιν, οὐδ' ἥσων ἔφυ
Γοργοῦς σταλαγμῶν, οἷς ἔμελλέ με κτανεῖν.
λάζυσθ', ἴν' αὐτῆς τοὺς ἀκηράτους πλόκους
κόμης καταξήνωσι Παρνασοῦ πλάκες,
ὄθεν πετραῖον ἄλμα δισκηθήσεται.
ἐσθλοῦ δ' ἔκυρσα δαίμονος, πρὶν ἐς πολιν
1270 μολεῖν Ἀθηνῶν χυτὸ μητρὺν πεσεῖν.
ἐν συμμάχοις γὰρ ἀνεμετρησάμην φρένας
τὰς σάς, ὅσον μοι πῆμα δυσμενὴς τ' ἔφυς·
εἴσω γὰρ ἂν με περιβαλοῦσα δικτύων
ἄρδην ἂν ἐξέπεμψας εἰς Ἀιδου δόμους.
ἀλλ' οὔτε βωμὸς οὔτ' Ἀπόλλωνος δόμος
σώσει σ'. ὁ δ' οἶκτος ὁ σὸς ἐμοὶ κρείσσων πάρα
καὶ μητρὶ τήμῃ· καὶ γὰρ εἰ τὸ σῶμά μοι
ἄπεστιν αὐτῆς, τοῦνομ' οὐκ ἄπεστί πω.
ἴδεσθε τὴν πανοῦργον, ἐκ τέχνης τέχνην
1280 οἶαν ἔπλεξε· βωμὸν ἔπτηξεν θεοῦ,
ὥς οὐ δίκην δώσουσα τῶν εἰργασμένων.

ION

CHORUS

Upon the altar take thy seat ;
For, if here they slay thee, shall thy blood to heaven
for vengeance call
On the murderers.

[CREUSA *seats herself on the altar, grasping
it with her hands.*

So :—and now to bear what fate soe'er befall. 1260

Enter ION with armed men followed by a crowd.

ION

O form bull-shapen of her sire Cephisus,¹
What viper of thy blood is this, or what
Dragon up-glaring murderous flame of fire !
Full of all hardihood, not less fell she is [death.
Than Gorgon's blood, wherewith she sought my
Seize her !—Parnassus' jagged terraces
Shall card the dainty tresses of her hair,
When quoitwise down the rocks she shall be hurled.
O grace of fortune, ere to Athens town
I came, and fell beneath a stepdame's power, 1270
Begirt with friends I sounded thy soul's depths,
Knew thee my bane, and measured all thine hate !
For, had thy nets ensnared me in thine home,
Me with one fling thou hadst hurled to Hades' halls.
Nay—not the altar, not Apollo's house
Shall save thee ! Ruth for thee !—rather for me
And for my mother :—though she be afar
In body, ever her name is in mine heart.
See her, vile monster ! Webs on webs of guile
She weaves ! At Phoebus' altar hath she crouched, 1280
As though she should not suffer for her deeds !
Beckons to the guards, who advance irresolutely.

¹ Praxithea, Creusa's mother, was grand-daughter of this River-god.

ΙΩΝ

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἀπεννέπω σε μὴ κατακτείνειν ἐμέ
ὑπὲρ τ' ἐμαυτῆς τοῦ θεοῦ θ' ἵν' ἔσταμεν.

ΙΩΝ

τί δ' ἐστὶ Φοίβῳ σοί τε κοινὸν ἐν μέσῳ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἱερὸν τὸ σῶμα τῷ θεῷ δίδωμ' ἔχειν.

ΙΩΝ

καὶ τ' ἔκτανες σὺ φαρμάκοις τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἀλλ' οὐκέτ' ἦσθα Λοξίου, πατρός δὲ σοῦ.

ΙΩΝ

ἀλλ' ἐγενόμεσθα, πατρός ἀπουσίαν¹ λέγω.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐκουν τότε ἦσθα ; νῦν δ' ἐγώ, σὺ δ' οὐκέτ' εἶ.

ΙΩΝ

1290 οὐκ εὐσεβῆς γε· τὰμὰ δ' εὐσεβῇ τότε ἦν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἔκτεινά σ' ὄντα πολέμιον δόμοις ἐμοῖς.

ΙΩΝ

οὗτοι σὺν ὅπλοις ἦλθον εἰς τὴν σὴν χθόνα.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

μάλιστα· καπὶμπρας γ' Ἐρεχθέως δόμους.

ΙΩΝ

ποίοισι πανοῖς ἢ πυρὸς ποία φλογί ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἔμελλες οἰκεῖν τὰμ', ἐμοῦ βία λαβών.

ΙΩΝ

πατρός γε γῆν διδόντος ἦν ἐκτήσατο.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τοῖς Αἰόλου δὲ πῶς μετὴν τῆς Παλλάδος ;

¹ Seidler : for δ' οὐσίαν of MSS.

ION

CREUSA

I warn thee, slay me not—for mine own sake,
And the God's sake, upon whose floor we stand !

ION

Phoebus—and thou? What part hast thou in Phoebus?

CREUSA

Myself I give to the God, a sacred thing.

ION

Thou sacred?—who didst poison the God's child !

CREUSA

Thou Loxias' child !—his never, but thy sire's.

ION

His I became while father I had none.

CREUSA

Ay, then :—now, I am his, thou his no more.

ION

Blasphemer !—his? His reverent child was I.

1290

CREUSA

I did but seek to slay mine house's foe.

ION

I came not sword in hand against thy land.

CREUSA

No?—Thou wouldst set Erechtheus' halls aflame.

ION

Yea? With what brands or with what flame of fire?

CREUSA

In mine house wouldst thou dwell, take mine by force.

ION

Take?—my sire *gives* the land that he hath won.

CREUSA

What part have Aeolus' sons in Pallas' land?

ΙΩΝ

ΙΩΝ

ὄπλοισιν αὐτήν, οὐ λόγοις ἐρρύσατο.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἐπίκουρος οἰκήτωρ γ' ἂν οὐκ εἴη χθονός.

ΙΩΝ

1300 κάπειτα τοῦ μέλλειν μ' ἀπέκτεινες φόβῳ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὥς μὴ θάνοιμί γ', εἰ σὺ μὴ μέλλων τύχοις.

ΙΩΝ

φθονεῖς ἄπαις οὐσ', εἰ πατήρ ἐξηῦρέ με.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

σὺ τῶν ἀτέκνων δῆτ' ἀναρπάσεις δόμους ;

ΙΩΝ

ἡμῖν δέ γ' ἀλλὰ πατρικῆς οὐκ ἦν μέρος ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὅσ' ἀσπὶς ἔγχος θ' ἤδε σοὶ παμπησία.

ΙΩΝ

ἔκλειπε βωμὸν καὶ θεηλάτους ἔδρας.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τὴν σὴν ὅπου σοι μητέρ' ἐστὶ νουθέτει.

ΙΩΝ

σὺ δ' οὐχ ὑφέξεις ζημίαν, κτείνουσ' ἐμέ ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἦν γ' ἐντὸς ἀδύτων τῶνδ' ἐμε σφάζαι θέλης.

ΙΩΝ

1310 τίς ἡδονή σοι θεοῦ θανεῖν ἐν στέμμασι ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

λυπηρόσμεν τιν', ὧν λελυπήμεσθ' ὕπο.

ΙΩΝ

φεῦ.

δεινὸν γε, θνητοῖς τοὺς νόμους ὥς οὐ καλῶς
ἔθηκεν ὁ θεὸς οὐδ' ἀπὸ γνώμης σοφῆς·

ION

ION

He was her saviour—and with arms, not words.

CREUSA

Should allies in possession take the land !

ION

Fearing what *might* await thee, thou wouldst slay me ? 1300

CREUSA

Ay, lest thou haply wait not, but slay me !

ION

Childless, dost grudge my father finding me ?

CREUSA

What, shalt thou seize all childless parents' homes ?

ION

Had I no part at least in my sire's wealth ?

CREUSA

His wealth !—a shield and spear. Take that thine is.

ION

Hence !—leave the altar and the hallowed seat !

CREUSA

Lesson thy mother, wheresoe'er she be.

ION

Shalt thou not suffer, who wouldst murder me ?

CREUSA

Yea—if thou dare to slay me mid the shrines.

ION

What joy hast thou mid Phoebus' wreaths to die ? 1310

CREUSA

So shall I trouble Him who troubled me.

ION

Out upon this !

Shame, that a God ordained unrighteous laws

For mortals, statutes not in wisdom framed !

ΙΩΝ

τοὺς μὲν γὰρ ἀδίκους βωμὸν οὐχ ἵζειν ἐχρήν,
ἀλλ' ἐξελαύνειν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ψαύειν καλὸν
θεῶν πονηρὰν χεῖρα· τοῖσι δ' ἐνδίκους
ιερὰ καθίζειν, ὅστις ἡδικεῖτ', ἐχρήν,
καὶ μὴ 'πὶ ταὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἰόντ' ἔχειν ἴσον
τόν τ' ἐσθλὸν ὄντα τόν τε μὴ θεῶν πάρα.

ΠΤΩΙΑ

1320 ἐπίσχεσ, ὦ παῖ· τρίποδα γὰρ χρηστήριον
λιποῦσα θρυγοῦ τοῦδ' ὑπερβάλλω πόδα
Φοῖβον προφήτης, τρίποδος ἀρχαῖον νόμον
σώζουσα, πασῶν Δελφίδων ἐξαίρετος.

ΙΩΝ

χαῖρ', ὦ φίλη μοι μήτηρ, οὐ τεκοῦσά περ.

ΠΤΩΙΑ

ἀλλ' οὖν ἐλεγόμεσθ'· ἡ φάτις δ' οὐ μοι πικρά.

ΙΩΝ

ἤκουσας ὥς μ' ἔκτεινεν ἦδε μηχαναῖς ;

ΠΤΩΙΑ

ἤκουσα· καὶ σύ γ' ὠμὸς ὢν ἀμαρτάνεις.

ΙΩΝ

οὐ χρή με τοὺς κτείνοντας ἀνταπολλύναι ;

ΠΤΩΙΑ

προγονοῖς δάμαρτες δυσμενεῖς αἰεὶ ποτε.

ΙΩΝ

1330 ἡμεῖς δὲ μητρυιαῖς γε πᾶσχοντες κακῶς.

ΠΤΩΙΑ

μὴ ταῦτα· λείπων ιερὰ καὶ στείχων πάτραν—

ΙΩΝ

τί δὴ με δρᾶσαι νουθετούμενον χρεῶν ;

ION

Never should crime have altar-sanctuary,
But hounding thence. Unmeet it is that hands
Sin-stained should touch the Gods: but righteous men,
Whoso is wronged, should claim their sanctuary,
And not the good and evil come alike
Hither to win the same boon of the Gods.

*Enter the PYTHIA, bearing a cradle, the contents of
which are concealed by a wrapping which partially
envelopes it.*

PYTHIA

Forbear, my son. The seat of prophecy 1320
I leave, and step across this temple-fence,
Priestess of Phoebus, chosen of Delphi's daughters
To guard his tripod's immemorial use.

ION

Hail, dear my mother, though thou didst not bear me.

PYTHIA

So was I called; nor did the name mislike me.

ION

Hast heard of yonder woman's plot to slay me?

PYTHIA

I heard: yet is thy ruthlessness all wrong.

ION

Shall I not pay death-wage to murderers?

PYTHIA

To stepsons from of old have wives been foes.

ION

Yea, I withal of stepdames have foul wrong. 1330

PYTHIA

Ah hush! Thou leav'st the fane, thou farest home—

ION

What must I do then at thy counselling?

ΙΩΝ

ΠΤΘΙΑ

καθαρὸς Ἀθήνας ἔλθ' ὑπ' οἰωνῶν καλῶν.

ΙΩΝ

καθαρὸς ἅπας τοι πολεμίους ὃς ἂν κτάνῃ.

ΠΤΘΙΑ

μὴ σύ γε· παρ' ἡμῶν δ' ἔκλαβ' οὓς ἔχω λόγους.

ΙΩΝ

λέγοις ἂν· εὖνους δ' οὓς' ἐρεῖς ὅς' ἂν λέγῃς.

ΠΤΘΙΑ

ὀρᾶς τόδ' ἄγγος χερὸς ὑπ' ἀγκάλαις ἐμαῖς ;

ΙΩΝ

ὀρῶ παλαιὰν ἀντίπηγ' ἐν στέμμασιν.

ΠΤΘΙΑ

ἐν τῇδέ σ' ἔλαβον νεόγονον βρέφος ποτέ.

ΙΩΝ

1340 τί φῆς ; ὁ μῦθος εἰσενήνεκται νέος.

ΠΤΘΙΑ

σιγῇ γὰρ εἶχον αὐτά· νῦν δὲ δείκνυμεν.

ΙΩΝ

πῶς οὖν ἔκρυπτες τόδε λαβοῦς' ἡμᾶς πάλαι ;

ΠΤΘΙΑ

ὁ θεός σ' ἐβούλετ' ἐν δόμοις ἔχειν λάτριν.

ΙΩΝ

νῦν δ' οὐχὶ χρήζει ; τῷ τόδε γνῶναί με χρή ;

ΠΤΘΙΑ

πατέρα κατειπὼν τῆσδέ σ' ἐκπέμπει χθονός.

ΙΩΝ

σὺ δ' ἐκ κελευσμῶν ἧ πόθεν σφάζεις τάδε ;

ΠΤΘΙΑ

ἐνθύμιόν μοι τότε τίθησι Λοξίας—

ΙΩΝ

τί χρήμα δρᾶσαι ; λέγε, πέραινε σοὺς λόγους.

ION

PYTHIA

With clean hands and fair omens go to Athens.

ION

Clean are the hands of whoso slays his foes.

PYTHIA

Nay, nay !—but hear the tale I bring to thee.

ION

Speak : it shall come of love, whate'er thou say.

PYTHIA

Seest thou this chest here cradled in mine arms ?

ION

I see an ancient ark with fillets dight.

PYTHIA

In this I found thee once, a new-born babe.

ION

What say'st thou ? Strange the story hither brought ! 1340

PYTHIA

Yea, I kept silence. I reveal it now.

ION

Why hide from me so long this found of thee ?

PYTHIA

The God would have thee minister in his house.

ION

Nor needeth now ? How shall I know it so ?

PYTHIA

Showing thy sire, he sends thee forth the land.

ION

Thou, by commandment keptest thou these things ?

PYTHIA

On that day Loxias put it in mine heart—

ION

To do what deed ? Say on, tell out the tale.

ΙΩΝ

ΠΤΘΙΑ

σῶσαι τόδ' εὖρημ' εἰς τὸν ὄντα νῦν χρόνον.

ΙΩΝ

1350 ἔχει δέ μοι τί κέρδος ἢ τίνα βλάβην ;

ΠΤΘΙΑ

ἐνθάδε κέκρυπται σπάργαν' οἷς ἐνήσθα σύ.

ΙΩΝ

μητρὸς τάδ' ἡμῖν ἐκφέρεις ζητήματα ;

ΠΤΘΙΑ

ἐπεὶ γ' ὁ δαίμων βούλεται· πάροιθε δ' οὔ.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ μακαρίων μοι φασμάτων ἦδ' ἡμέρα.

ΠΤΘΙΑ

λαβὼν νῦν αὐτὰ τὴν τεκοῦσαν ἐκπόνει.

ΙΩΝ

πᾶσαν δ' ἐπελθὼν Ἀσιάδ' Εὐρώπης θ' ὄρους ;

ΠΤΘΙΑ

1360 γνῶσει τάδ' αὐτός. τοῦ θεοῦ δ' ἔκατί σε
ἔθρεψά τ', ὦ παῖ, καὶ τάδ' ἀποδίδωμί σοι,
ἂ κείνος ἀκέλευστόν μ' ἐβουλήθη λαβεῖν
σῶσαί θ'· ὅτου δέ γ' εἵνεκ', οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν.
ἦδει δὲ θνητῶν οὔτις ἀνθρώπων τάδε
ἔχοντας ἡμᾶς, οὐδ' ἔν' ἦν κεκρυμμένα.
καὶ χαῖρ'· ἴσον γάρ σ' ὥς τεκοῦς' ἀσπάζομαι.
ἄρξαι δ' ὅθεν σὴν μητέρα ζητεῖν σε χρή·
πρῶτον μὲν εἴ τις Δελφίδων τεκοῦσά σε
εἰς τούσδε ναοὺς ἐξέθηκε παρθένος,
ἔπειτα δ' εἴ τις Ἑλλάς· ἐξ ἡμῶν δ' ἔχεις
ἅπαντα Φοίβου θ', ὃς μετέσχε τῆς τύχης.

ION

PYTHIA

To keep this treasure-trove against this hour.

ION

What profit or what hurt hath this for me ? 1350

PYTHIA

This hides the swaddling-bands that wrapped thee then.

ION

My mother !—clues be these for finding her ?

PYTHIA

Yea, 'tis the God's will now—not heretofore.

ION

O day of blessed revelations this !

PYTHIA

Take them—rest not until thou find thy mother.

ION

How ?—search all Asia through, search Europe's bounds ?

PYTHIA

Thou shalt not err, thou. For the God's own sake
I nursed thee, boy : these give I back to thee,
Which his unspoken will then made me take
And guard. Why thus he willed I cannot tell : 1360
But none of mortal men was ware that I
Had these, nor hidden in what place they lay.
Farewell . . . for as a mother kiss I thee.

Turns to go, but resumes—

Where thou shouldst seek thy mother, there begin—
First, did a Delphian bride unwedded bear
And cast thee forth upon these temple-steps ?
Then, any maid of Greece ? . . . So hast thou all
Of me, and Phoebus, partner in thy fortune. [*Exit.*

ΙΩΝ

ΙΩΝ

1370

φεῦ φεῦ· κατ' ὅσων ὡς ὑγρὸν βάλλω δάκρυ,
ἐκείσε τὸν νοῦν δούς, ὅθ' ἡ τεκούσά με
κρυφαῖα νυμφευθεῖς' ἀπημπόλα λάθρα
καὶ μαστὸν οὐχ ὑπέσχε· ἀλλ' ἀνώνυμος
ἐν θεοῦ μελάθροισι εἶχον οἰκέτην βίον.

1380

τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ μὲν χρηστά, τοῦ δὲ δαίμονος
βαρέα· χρόνον γὰρ ὃν μ' ἐχρῆν ἐν ἀγκάλαις
μητρὸς τρυφήσαι καὶ τι τερφθῆναι βίου,
ἀπεστερήθην φιλτάτης μητρὸς τροφῆς.

τλήμων δε χῆ τεκούσά μ', ὡς ταῦτόν πάθος
πέπονθε, παιδὸς ἀπολέσασα χαρμονάς.

καὶ νῦν λαβὼν τήνδ' ἀντίπηγ' οἶσω θεῷ
ἀνάθημ', ἵν' εὖρω μηδὲν ὦν οὐ βούλομαι.

εἰ γὰρ με δούλη τυγχάνει τεκούσά τις,
εὐρεῖν κάκιον μητέρ' ἢ σιγῶντ' ἔαν.

ὦ Φοῖβε, ναοῖς ἀνατίθηναι τήνδε σοῖς.

καίτοι τί πάσχω ; τοῦ θεοῦ προθυμία
πολεμῶ, τὰ μητρὸς σύμβολ' ὃς σέσωκέ μοι.
ἀνοικτέον τὰδ' ἐστὶ καὶ τολμητέον.

1390

τὰ γὰρ πεπρωμέν' οὐχ ὑπερβαίην ποτ' ἄν.

ὦ στέμμαθ' ἱερά, τί ποτέ μοι κεκεύθατε,

καὶ σύνδεθ', οἷσι τὰμ' ἐφρουρήθη φίλα ;

ἰδοὺ περίπτυγμ' ἀντίπηγος εὐκύκλου,

ὡς οὐ γεγήρακ' ἔκ τινος θεηλάτου,

εὐρώς τ' ἄπεστι πλεγμάτων· ὁ δ' ἐν μέσῳ
χρόνος πολὺς δὴ τοῖσδε θησαυρίσμασιν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τί δῆτα φάσμα τῶν ἀνελπίστων ὀρώ ;

ΙΩΝ

σίγα σύ· πολλὰ καὶ πάροιθεν οἶσθα μοι.

ION

ION

Ah me, mine eyes are drowned in streaming tears,
As leaps my thought to that day when the bride 1370
Betrayed, who bare, by stealth to thralldom sold me,
Nor ever suckled me : but nameless all
In the God's court I lived a servant's life.
Kind was the God's part, but my fortune's hand
Heavy ; for while I should of right have lain
Soft in a mother's arms, and known life's joy,
Of a sweet mother's care was I bereft.

O hapless she who bare me, who hath suffered
Like me, hath lost the joys of motherhood !
But this ark will I bear unto the God; 1380
An offering—lest I find aught I would not.
For, if perchance a slave-girl gave me birth,
'Twere worse to find a mother than let be.
Phoebus, I offer this unto thy fane . . .
What ails me ? Lo, I fight against the favour
Of Him who saved for me my mother's tokens !
This must I open, face what must be faced ;
For never can I overstep my doom.

Ah, sacred fillets, what have ye hid for me,
O bands wherein mine heart's desire was kept ? 1390
Lo, the enwrapping of the ark's fair curve,
How by a miracle it waxed not old ;
The osier-plaitings mouldless !—yet long time
Since then hath o'er these treasure-relics passed.

CREUSA

What, O what vision see I, past all hope !

ION

Peace !—for thou canst be silent—as the grave.

ΙΩΝ

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

1400 οὐκ ἐν σιωπῇ τὰμά· μή με νουθέτει.
 ὀρώ γὰρ ἄγγος οὐξέθηκ' ἐγὼ ποτε
 σέ γ', ὦ τέκνον μοι, βρέφος ἔτ' ὄντα νήπιον,
 Κέκροπος ἐς ἄντρα καὶ Μακρὰς πετρηρεφεῖς.
 λείψω δὲ βωμόν· τόνδε, κεῖ θανεῖν με χρή.

ΙΩΝ

λάζυσθε τήνδε· θεομανῆς γὰρ ἦλατο
 βωμοῦ λιποῦσα ξόανα· δεῖτε δ' ὠλένας.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

σφάζοντες οὐ λήγοιτ' ἄν· ὥς ἀνθέξομαι
 καὶ τῆσδε καὶ σοῦ τῶν τε σῶν κεκρυμμένων.

ΙΩΝ

τάδ' οὐχὶ δεινά ; ῥησιάζομαι λόγῳ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐκ, ἀλλὰ σοῖς φίλοισιν εὐρίσκει φίλος.

ΙΩΝ

ἐγὼ φίλος σός ; κατὰ μ' ἔκτεινες λάθρα ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

παῖς γ', εἰ τόδ' ἐστὶ τοῖς τεκοῦσι φίλτατον.

ΙΩΝ

1410 παῦσαι πλέκονσα· λήψομαί σ' ἐγὼ καλῶς.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

εἰς τοῦθ' ἰκοίμην, τοῦδε τοξεύω, τέκνον.

ΙΩΝ

κενθὸν τόδ' ἄγγος ἢ στέγει πλήρωμά τι ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

σά γ' ἔνδυθ', οἷσί σ' ἐξέθηκ' ἐγὼ ποτε.

ΙΩΝ

καὶ τοῦνομ' αὐτῶν ἐξερεῖς πρὶν εἰσιδεῖν ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

κἂν μὴ φράσω γε, κατθανεῖν ὑφίσταμαι.

ION

CREUSA

Not for me silence ! Teach not me my part !
I see the ark wherein I set thee forth,—
Thee, O my child, my babbling baby then,—
In Cecrops' cave, beneath the Long Cliff's brow ! 1400
This altar will I leave, yea, though I die.
[Flings her arms round his neck.]

ION

Seize her !—she hath been driven god-distraught
To leave the carven altar ! Bind her arms.

CREUSA

Slay on—spare not—for I will cling, will cling
To this, thee, and thy tokens hidden there.

ION

Foul outrage ! I am kidnapped by her tongue !

CREUSA

No, no !—but found, O love, of her that loves !

ION

I thy beloved—whom thou wouldst slay by stealth !

CREUSA

Yes—yes ! my son ! Is aught to parents dearer ?

ION

Cease !—I shall take thee mid thy webs of guile. 1410

CREUSA

Take me ?—ah take ! I strain thereto, my child.

ION

Void is this ark, or somewhat doth it hide ?

CREUSA

Yea, that which wrapped thee when I cast thee forth.

ION

Speak out and name them ere thine eyes behold.

CREUSA

Yea, if I tell not, I submit to die.

ΙΩΝ

ΙΩΝ

λέγ'. ὥς ἔχει τι δεινὸν ἢ τόλμη γέ σου.

ΚΡΕΟΤΣΑ

σκέψασθ' ὃ παῖς ποτ' οὐσ' ὕφασμ' ὕφην' ἐγώ·

ΙΩΝ

ποιὸν τί ; πολλὰ παρθένων ὑφάσματα.

ΚΡΕΟΤΣΑ

οὐ τέλεον, οἶον δ' ἐκδίδαγμα κερκίδος.

ΙΩΝ

1420

μορφὴν ἔχον τίν' ; ὥς με μὴ ταύτη λάβης.

ΚΡΕΟΤΣΑ

Γοργῶν μὲν ἐν μέσοισιν ἡτρίοις πέπλων.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ Ζεῦ, τίς ἡμᾶς ἐκκυνηγετεῖ πότμος ;

ΚΡΕΟΤΣΑ

κεκρασπέδωται δ' ὄφεσιν αἰγίδος τρόπον.

ΙΩΝ

ιδού.

τόδ' ἔσθ' ὕφασμα· θέσφαθ' ὥς εὐρίσκομεν.

ΚΡΕΟΤΣΑ

ὦ χρόνιον ἰστῶν παρθένευμα τῶν ἐμῶν.

ΙΩΝ

ἔστιν τι πρὸς τῷδ', ἢ μόνῳ τῷδ' εὐτυχεῖς ;

ΚΡΕΟΤΣΑ

δράκοντες· ἀρχαῖόν τι παγχρύσῳ γένυι.
δῶρημ' Ἀθάνας, ἢ τέκν' ἐντρέφειν λέγει.
Ἐριχθονίου γε τοῦ πάλαι μιμήματα.

ΙΩΝ

1430

τί δρᾶν, τί χρῆσθαι, φράζε μοι, χρυσώματι ;

ΚΡΕΟΤΣΑ

δέραια παιδὶ νεογόνῳ φέρειν, τέκνον,

ION

ION

Say on :—'tis passing strange, thy confidence !

CREUSA

See there the web I wove in girlhood's days.

ION

Its fashion ?—girls be ever weaving webs.

CREUSA

No perfect work ; 'twas but a prentice hand.

ION

The pattern tell :—thou shalt not trick me so. 1420

CREUSA

A Gorgon in the mid-threads of a shawl.

ION (*aside*)

O Zeus, what weird is this that dogs our steps ?

CREUSA

'Tis fringed with serpents—with the Aegis-fringe.

ION

Lo, here the web ! (*lifts and spreads it forth.*)

How strangely find we here the oracle !

CREUSA

O work of girlhood's loom, so long unseen !

ION

Is there aught else ?—or this thy one true shot ?

CREUSA

Serpents, an old device, with golden jaws—

Athena's gift, who biddeth deck babes so—

Moulded from Erichthonius' snakes of old.

ION

What use, what purpose, tell me, hath the jewel ? 1430

CREUSA

A necklace for the new-born babe, my child.

ΙΩΝ

ΙΩΝ

ἔνεισιν οὔδε· τὸ δὲ τρίτον ποθῶ μαθεῖν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

στέφανον ἐλαίας ἀμφέθηκά σοι τότε,
ἦν πρῶτ' Ἀθάνα σκόπελον ἐξηνέγκατο,
ὃς, εἴπερ ἔστιν, οὔ ποτ' ἐκλείπει χλόην,
θάλλει δ' ἐλαίας ἐξ ἀκηράτου γεγώς.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ φιλτάτη μοι μήτηρ, ἄσμενός σ' ἰδὼν
πρὸς ἀσμένης πέπτωκα σὰς παρηίδας.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

1440

ὦ τέκνον, ὦ φῶς μητρὶ κρεῖσσον ἡλίου—
συγγνώσεται γὰρ ὁ θεός—ἐν χεροῖν σ' ἔχω,
ἄελπτον εὖρημ', ὃν κατὰ γᾶς ἐνέrawn
χθόνιον μετὰ Περσεφόνας τ' ἐδόκουν ναίειν.

ΙΩΝ

ἄλλ', ὦ φίλη μοι μήτηρ, ἐν χεροῖν σέθεν
ὁ κατθανὼν τε κοῦ θανὼν φαντάζομαι.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἰὼ ἰώ, λαμπρᾶς αἰθέρος ἀμπτυχαί,
τίν' αὐδὰν αὖσω,
βοάσω ; πόθεν μοι
συνέκυρσ' ἀδόκητος ἡδονά ; πόθεν
ἐλάβομεν χαράν ;

ΙΩΝ

1450

ἐμοὶ γενέσθαι πάντα μᾶλλον ἂν ποτε,
μήτηρ, παρέστη τῶνδ', ὅπως σός εἰμ' ἐγώ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἔτι φόβῳ τρέμω.

ΙΩΝ

μῶν οὐκ ἔχειν μ' ἔχουσα ;

ION

ION

Even these be here. The third I long to know.

CREUSA

A wreath of olive set I on thee then :
Athena brought it first unto our rock.
If this be there, it hath not lost its green,
But blooms yet, from the sacred olive sprung.

ION

Mother !—dear mother !—glad, O glad, I fall,
Beholding thee, on thy cheeks gladness-flushed.

CREUSA

Child !—light to mother better than the sun—
The God will pardon—I have thee in mine arms, 1440
Unhoped treasure-trove !—as a dweller in Hades, so
thought I of thee,
An abider mid nethergloom shades with Persephone.

ION

Ah no, dear mother mine ; within thine arms
Revealed is he that liveth and was dead.

CREUSA

Ho ye, ye unfoldings of ether, ye sunlit expanses,
In what cry shall I peal out my rapture ? O whence
unto me [strange chances
Came it, this sweetness undreamed of ? By what
Such bliss do I see ?

ION

Naught were so strange, but I had looked for that, 1450
O mother, rather than to know me thine.

CREUSA

Still I tremble with dread—

ION

Lest holding thou hold me not ?

ΙΩΝ

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τὰς γὰρ ἐλπίδας
ἀπέβαλον πρόσω.
ὦ γύναι, πόθεν πόθεν ἔλαβες ἐμὸν
βρέφος ἐς ἀγκάλας ;
τίν' ἀνὰ χέρα δόμους ἔβα Λοξίου ;

ΙΩΝ

θεῖον τόδ'· ἀλλὰ τὰπίλοιπα τῆς τύχης
εὐδαιμονοῦμεν, ὥς τὰ πρόσθε δυστυχῇ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

1460 τέκνον, οὐκ ἀδάκρυτος ἐκλοχεύει,
γούois δὲ ματρὸς ἐκ χερῶν ὀρίζει·
νῦν δὲ γενειάσιν παρὰ σέθεν πνέω
μακαριωτάτας τυχοῦσ' ἡδονᾶς.

ΙΩΝ

τοῦμόν λέγουσα καὶ τὸ σὸν κοινῶς λέγεις.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἄπαιδες οὐκέτ' ἐσμέν οὐδ' ἄτεκνοι·
δῶμ' ἐστιοῦται, γὰρ δ' ἔχει τυράννους·
ἀνηβᾶ δ' Ἐρεχθεύς,
ὃ τε γηγενέτας δόμος οὐκέτι νύκτα
δέρκεται, ἀελίου δ' ἀναβλέπει λαμπάσιν.

ΙΩΝ

μῆτερ, παρών μοι καὶ πατὴρ μετασχέτω
τῆς ἡδονῆς τῇσδ' ἧς ἔδωχ' ὑμῖν ἐγώ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

1470 ὦ τέκνον, τί φῆς ; οἶον οἶον ἀνελέγχομαι.

ION

CREUSA

I had seen hope flee
So long ago !
O prophetess, whence and O whence to thine arms
came he,
My little one ?
Upborne by what hand unto Loxias' halls was he sped ?

ION

A miracle : but through our lot to be
May we be happy as our past was sad.

CREUSA

At thy birth-travail, O my child, was there many a
tear : [many a moan :
Thou wert torn from the arms of thy mother with
And now on thy cheeks is my breath : my darling is 1460
here ! [known !
The uttermost bliss of the Blessèd, lo, now have I

ION

Thou speakest for mine heart and thine, as one.

CREUSA

No more are we childless, no more unto barrenness
banned : [kings hath the land.
The home hath the hearth-glow again, and her
The strength of his youth doth Erechtheus renew :
The house of the Earth-born Race no longer to night-
ward shall gaze,
But the sun's beam cleaveth its darkness through.

ION

Mother, my sire is here : let him too share
This happiness which I have given to you.

CREUSA

O child, child, what sayest thou ?—must the shame
be laid bare of thy mother ? 1470

ΙΩΝ

ΙΩΝ

πῶς εἶπας ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἄλλοθεν γέγονας, ἄλλοθεν.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ μοι· νόθον με παρθένευμ' ἔτικτε σὺν ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

οὐχ ὑπὸ λαμπάδων οὐδὲ χορευμάτων
ὑμέναιος ἐμός,
τέκνον, ἔτικτε σὺν κára.

ΙΩΝ

αἰαῖ· πέφυκα δυσγενής, μήτερ, πόθεν ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἴστω Γοργοφόνα—

ΙΩΝ

τί τοῦτ' ἔλεξας ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

1480 ἂ σκοπέλοις ἐπ' ἐμοῖς
τὸν ἐλαιοφυῇ πάγον θάσσει—

ΙΩΝ

λέγεις μοι δόλια κού σαφή τάδε.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

παρ' ἀηδόνιον πέτραν Φοῖβω—

ΙΩΝ

τί Φοῖβον αὐδᾶς ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

κρυπτόμενον λέχος ἡνιάσθημ.

ΙΩΝ

λέγ'· ὥς ἐρεῖς τι κεδνὸν εὖτυχές τε μοι.

ION

ION

What is this thou hast said ?

CREUSA

Of another thou camest—oh, of another !

ION

Woe's me ! a bastard ?—child of maiden's shame ?

CREUSA

No torches were gleaming, no raiment outstreaming
In the dance, my child, for the bridal bed
Which brought to the birth thy dear-loved head !

ION

Alas ! base-born am I ?—O mother, whence ?

CREUSA

Be witness the Gorgon-slaying Maid—

ION

What is this ?—what meaneth the word thou hast
said ?

CREUSA

Who hath set on my watch-tower crags her throne
On the hill with her olives overgrown,—

1480

ION

Dark sayings are these, and I cannot interpret the
thing.

CREUSA

Unto Phoebus beside the rock where the nightin-
gales sing—

ION

What should of Phoebus by thee be said ?

CREUSA

In a bridal from all men hid was I wed.

ION

Say on : glad tidings this and fortune fair !

ΙΩΝ

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

δεκάτῳ δέ σε μηνὸς ἐν
κύκλῳ κρύφιον ὠδίν' ἔτεκον Φοιβῶ.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ φίλτατ' εἰποῦς', εἰ λέγεις ἐτήτυμα.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

1490

παρθένια δ' ἐμοῦ¹ ματέρος
σπάργαν' ἀμφίβολά σοι τάδ' ἐν-
ῆψα, κερκίδος ἐμᾶς πλάνους.
γάλακτι δ' οὐκ ἐπέσχον, οὐδὲ μαστῶ
τροφεῖα ματρὸς οὐδὲ λουτρὰ χειροῖν,
ἀνὰ δ' ἄντρον ἔρημον οἰωνῶν
γαμφηλαῖς φόνευμα θοίναμά τ' εἰς
Αἰδαν ἐκβάλλει.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ δεινὰ τλᾶσα μῆτερ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

1500

ἐν φόβῳ καταδεθεῖσα σὰν
ψυχὰν ἀπέβαλον, τέκνον·
ἔκτεινά σ' ἄκουσ'.

ΙΩΝ

ἐξ ἐμοῦ τ' οὐχ ὅσι' ἔθνησκες.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ἰὼ· δειναὶ μὲν τότε τύχαι,
δεινὰ δὲ καὶ τάδ'· ἐλίσσόμεσθ' ἐκεῖθεν
ἐνθάδε δυστυχίαισιν
εὐτυχίαις τε πάλιν,
μεθίσταται δὲ πνεύματα.
μενέτω· τὰ πάροιθεν ἄλλης κακά· νῦν δ'
ἐγένετό τις οὔρος ἐκ κακῶν, ὦ παῖ.

¹ Barnes : for MSS. ἐμᾶς.

ION

CREUSA

And the months swept round, till the tenth month
came,
And I bare unto Phoebus a child of shame.

ION

O happy words, if this thou say'st be true !

CREUSA

And these, these mother's swathing-bands
About thee cast, my maiden hands
Wrought, my loom's skill-less fashionings.
Not to thy lips for suck I gave
The breast, nor with mine hands did lave ;
But forth into a lonesome cave,
A banquet-spoil for swooping wings,
To Hades thee thy mother flings.

1490

ION

O mother, what horror to do, to dare !

CREUSA

I was thrall unto terror—I flung away
Thy life, my baby : I steeled me to slay,
When mine heart was moaning “ Spare ! ”

1500

ION

And of me nigh slain !—foul horror it were !

CREUSA

O fearful chances of that dark day,
And of this withal ! We are tossed to drift
On the surge of calamity hither and thither :
Yet anon do the winds of heaven shift,

And behold, we are gliding through summer
weather !

[suffice.

Oh may it last !—for the ills overpast should surely
Fair winds, my son, now are wafting us on, after
stormy skies.

145

ΙΩΝ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1510

μηδείς δοκείτω μηδὲν ἀνθρώπων ποτὲ
ἄελπτον εἶναι πρὸς τὰ τυγχάνοντα νῦν.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ μεταβαλοῦσα μυρίους ἤδη βροτῶν
καὶ δυστυχῆσαι καὶ θις αὐτὴ πρᾶξαι καλῶς,
Τύχη, παρ' οἷαν ἤλθομεν στάθμην βίου,
μητέρα φονεῦσαι καὶ παθεῖν ἀνάξια.
φεῦ.

1520

ἄρ' ἐν φαενναῖς ἡλίου περιπτυχαῖς
ἔνεστι πάντα τάδε καθ' ἡμέραν μαθεῖν ;
φίλον μὲν οὖν σ' εὔρημα, μήτηρ, ἡὔρομεν,
καὶ τὸ γένος οὐδὲν μεμπτόν, ὥς ἡμῖν, τόδε·
τὰ δ' ἄλλα πρὸς σέ βούλομαι μόνην φράσαι.
δεῦρ' ἔλθ'· ἐς οὓς σοι τοὺς λόγους εἰπεῖν θέλω
καὶ περικαλύψαι τοῖσι πράγμασι σκότον.
ὄρα σύ, μήτηρ, μὴ σφαλεῖς· ἂ παρθένοις
ἐγγίγνεται νοσήματ' εἰς κρυπτοὺς γάμους,
ἔπειτα τῷ θεῷ προστίθης τὴν αἰτίαν,
καὶ τοῦ μὲν αἵσχρον ἀποφυγεῖν πειρωμένη,
Φοῖβω τεκεῖν με φής, τεκοῦσ' οὐκ ἐκ θεοῦ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

1530

μὰ τὴν παρασπίζουσαν ἄρμασιν ποτε
Νίκην Ἀθάναν Ζηνὶ γηγενεῖς ἔπι,
οὐκ ἔστιν ὅστις σοι πατὴρ θνητῶν, τέκνον,
ἀλλ' ὅσπερ ἐξέθρεψε Λοξίας ἀναξ.

ΙΩΝ

πῶς οὖν τὸν αὐτοῦ παῖδ' ἔδωκ' ἄλλω πατρὶ,
Ξούθου τε φησὶ παῖδά μ' ἐκπεφυκέναι ;

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

πεφυκέναι μὲν οὐχί, δωρεῖται δέ σε
αὐτοῦ γεγῶτα· καὶ γὰρ ἂν φίλος φίλω
δοίη τὸν αὐτοῦ παῖδα δεσπότην δόμων.

ION

CHORUS

Let none e'er deem aught in the lot of man
Past hope, who marketh what to-day befalls. 1510

ION

O Fortune, thou that shiftest countless mortals
Unto misfortune, and anon to weal,
How nearly to this pass we came, that I
Should slay my mother, should of her be slain !
Ah strange !

Yet—midst the bright embraces of the sun
Somewhere do such things day by day befall ?
Sweet, mother, is my treasure-trove of thee ;
And this my birth, I find no fault therein.

Yet somewhat would I say to thee apart. 1520
Come hither : I would speak it in thine ear,
And fold about with darkness that thy past.
See to it, mother, lest thy steps have slipped,
As maids infatuate yield to love—to shame,
And upon Phoebus now thou chargest this,
And, striving to escape the shame of me,
Dost name the God my sire, who sire was none.

CREUSA

No !—by Athena, Lady of Victory, who
At Zeus' side chariot-borne with Giants fought,
No mortal man was sire to thee, my son, 1530
But he which reared thee, Loxias the King.

ION

How gave he then his own son to another,
And named me Xuthus' true-begotten son ?

CREUSA

Nay, not begotten ; but his gift art thou,
Sprung from himself,—as friend to friend should give
His own son, that his house might have an heir.

ΙΩΝ

ΙΩΝ

ὁ θεὸς ἀληθής, ἣ μάτην μαντεύεται,
ἐμοῦ ταράσσει, μῆτερ, εἰκότως φρένα.

ΚΡΕΟΤΣΑ

1540 ἄκουε δὴ νυν ἄμ' ἐσῆλθεν, ὦ τέκνον·
εὐεργετῶν σε Λοξίας ἐς εὐγενή
δόμον καθίζει· τοῦ θεοῦ δὲ λεγόμενος,
οὐκ ἔσχες ἄν ποτ' οὔτε παγκλήρους δόμους
οὔτ' ὄνομα πατρός. πῶς γάρ, οὐ γ' ἐγὼ γάμους
ἔκρυπτον αὐτὴ καί σ' ἀπέκτεινον λάθρα ;
ὁ δ' ὠφελῶν σε προστίθης' ἄλλω πατρί.

ΙΩΝ

οὐχ ὥδε φαύλως αὐτ' ἐγὼ μετέρχομαι,
ἀλλ' ἱστορήσω Φοῖβον εἰσελθὼν δόμους,
εἴτ' εἰμὶ θνητοῦ πατρὸς εἴτε Λοξίου.
1550 ἔα· τίς οἴκων θυοδόκων ὑπερτελῆς
ἀντήλιον πρόσωπον ἐκφαίνει θεῶν ;
φεύγωμεν, ὦ τεκοῦσα, μὴ τὰ δαιμόνων
ὀρώμεν, εἰ μὴ καιρὸς ἐσθ' ἡμᾶς ὀράν.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

μὴ φεύγετ'· οὐ γὰρ πολεμίαν με φεύγετε,
ἀλλ' ἐν τ' Ἀθήναις κἀνθάδ' οὔσαν εὐμενῇ.
ἐπώνυμος δὲ σῆς ἀφικόμην χθονός,
Παλλάς, δρόμῳ σπεύσας' Ἀπόλλωνος πάρα,
ὃς εἰς μὲν ὄψιν σφῶν μολεῖν οὐκ ἡξίου,
μὴ τῶν πάροιθε μέμψις εἰς μέσον μόλη,
1560 ἡμᾶς δὲ πέμπει τοὺς λόγους ὑμῖν φράσαι,
ὥς ἦδε τίκτει σ' ἐξ' Ἀπόλλωνος πατρός,
δίδωσι δ' οἷς ἔδωκεν, οὐ φύσασί σε,
ἀλλ' ὥς κομίζῃ σ' οἶκον εὐγενέστατον.
ἐπεὶ δ' ἀνεφύχθῃ πρᾶγμα μηνυθὲν τόδε,
θανεῖν σε δείσας μητρὸς ἐκ βουλευμάτων

ION

ION

Is the God true?—or doth his oracle lie?
Mother, my soul it troubleth : well it may.

CREUSA

Hear now what cometh to my mind, my son ;
Of kindness Loxias giveth thee a place . 1540
In a proud house : hadst thou been called his son,
Thou hadst had none inheritance thereof,
Nor a sire's name :—how couldst thou, when myself
Still hid his rape, yea, by thy secret death?
Thee for thy good to another sire he gives.

ION

Nay, not thus lightly on the quest I press.
I will ask Phoebus, entering his fane,
“ Am I of Loxias, or a mortal sire ? ”

ATHENA *appears above the temple in her chariot.*

Ha ! high above the incense-breathing house .
What God reveals a face that fronts the Sun ? 1550
Let us flee, mother, lest we gaze on Gods,
Except in season meet for that great vision.

ATHENA

Fly not ; no foe am I that ye should flee,
But, as in Athens, here am gracious-willed.
I come from thy land—land that bears my name :
I Pallas from Apollo speed in haste,
Who deigned not to reveal him to your sight,
Else must he chide you for things overpast,
But sendeth me to tell to you his words :—
Thee this queen bare, begotten of Apollo : 1560
He gives to whom he gave, not that they gat thee,
But for thy bringing home to a princely house ;
Then, when the matter was laid bare and told,
Fearing lest thou shouldst of her plot be slain,

καὶ τήνδε πρὸς σοῦ, μηχαναῖς ἐρρύσατο.
 ἔμελλε δ' αὐτὰ διασιωπήσας ἄναξ
 ἐν ταῖς Ἀθήναις γνωριεῖν ταύτην τε σήν,
 σέ θ' ὥς πέφυκας τῆσδε καὶ Φοίβου πατρός.
 ἀλλ' ὥς περαίνω πρᾶγμα, καὶ χρησμούς θεοῦ,
 1570 ἐφ' οἷσιν ἔξευξ' ἄρματ', εἰσακούσατον.
 λαβοῦσα τόνδε παῖδα Κεκροπίαν χθόνα
 χώρει, Κρέουσα, κεῖς θρόνους τυραννικούς
 ἰδρυσον· ἐκ γὰρ τῶν Ἐρεχθέως γεγῶς
 δίκαιος ἄρχειν τῆς ἐμῆς ὁδε χθονός.
 ἔσται δ' ἂν Ἑλλάδ' εὐκλεής· οἱ τοῦδε γὰρ
 παῖδες γενόμενοι τέσσαρες ρίζης μᾶς,
 ἐπώνυμοι γῆς κάπιφυλίου χθονός
 λαὼν ἔσσονται, σκόπελον οἱ ναίουσ' ἐμόν.
 Γελέων μὲν ἔσται πρῶτος· εἴτα δεύτερος

1580 "Ὅπλητες Ἀργαδῆς τ', ἐμῆς τ' ἀπ' αἰγίδος
 ἐν φύλον ἔξουσ' Αἰγικορῆς. οἱ τῶνδε δ' αὖ
 παῖδες γενόμενοι σὺν χρόνῳ πεπρωμένῳ
 Κυκλάδας ἐποικήσουσι νησαίας πόλεις
 χέρσους τε παράλους, ὃ σθένης τῇμῃ χθονὶ
 δίδωσιν· ἀντίπορθμα δ' ἠπείρου δυοῖν
 πεδία κατοικήσουσιν, Ἀσιάδος τε γῆς
 Εὐρωπίας τε· τοῦδε δ' ὀνόματος χάριν
 Ἰωνες ὀνομασθέντες ἔξουσιν κλέος.
 1590 Ξούθῳ δὲ καὶ σοὶ γίγνεται κοινὸν γένος,
 Δῶρος μὲν, ἔνθεν Δωρὶς ὑμνηθήσεται
 πόλις· κατ' αἶαν Πελοπίαν δ' ὁ δεύτερος
 Ἀχαιός, ὃς γῆς παραλίας Ῥίου πέλας
 τύραννος ἔσται, κάπισημανθήσεται
 κείνου κεκληῆσθαι λαὸς ὄνομ' ἐπώνυμος.
 καλῶς δ' Ἀπόλλων πάντ' ἔπραξε· πρῶτα μὲν

ION

And she of thee, saved thee by that device.
Now the God would have kept the secret hid
Until in Athens he revealed her thine,
And thee the son of her and Phoebus born.

But—to make end and tell his oracles,
For which I yoked my chariot, hearken ye. 1570
Take this thy son and go to Cecrops' land,
Creusa, and on thrones of sovereignty
Seat him ; for, of Erechtheus' lineage sprung,
Worthy he is to rule o'er mine own land.
Famed shall he be through Hellas ; for the sons
Born to him, even four from this one root,
Shall give their names unto the several tribes
Of the land's folk which dwell upon mine hill.

Geleon the first shall be ; the second tribe
Hopletes ; Argades the third : the fourth, 1580
One tribe, of my shield named Aegicores.
And their sons in the fulness of the time
Shall found them cities in the Cyclad Isles,
And seaboard realms, for strength unto my land.
Yea, they shall people either mainland's plains
On either side the strait, of Asia-land
And Europe : and because of thy son's name
Ionians shall be named, and win renown.

From Xuthus too and thee a seed shall spring, .
Dorus, of whom shall Doris song-renowned 1590
Arise : the second goeth to Pelops' land,
Achaeus ; o'er the seaboard shall he reign
Nigh Rhion, and the people of his name
Among the nations shall be sealed therewith.
Well hath Apollo all things done : for, first,

ΙΩΝ

ἄνοσον λοχεύει σ', ὥστε μὴ γνῶναι φίλους·
 ἐπεὶ δ' ἔτικτες τόνδε παῖδα καπέθου
 ἐν σπαργάνοισιν, ἀρπάσαντ' ἐς ἀγκάλας
 Ἑρμῆν κελεύει δεῦρο πορθμεῦσαι βρέφος,
 1600 ἔθρεψέ τ' οὐδ' εἶασεν ἐκπνεῦσαι βίον.
 νῦν οὖν σιώπα, παῖς ὃδ' ὡς πέφυκε σός,
 ἵν' ἡ δόκησις Ξοῦθον ἠδέως ἔχη,
 σύ τ' αὖ τὰ σαυτῆς ἀγάθ' ἔχουσ' ἴης, γύναι.
 καὶ χαίρετ'· ἐκ γὰρ τῆσδ' ἀναψυχῆς πόνων
 εὐδαίμων' ὑμῖν πότμον ἐξαγγέλλομαι.

ΙΩΝ

ὦ Διὸς Παλλὰς μεγίστου θύγατερ, οὐκ ἀπιστία
 σοὺς λόγους ἐνδεξόμεσθα· πείθομαι δ' εἶναι
 πατρὸς
 Λοξίου καὶ τῆσδε· καὶ πρὶν τοῦτο δ' οὐκ ἄπιστον
 ἦν.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

τὰμὰ νῦν ἄκουσον· αἰνῶ Φοῖβον οὐκ αἰνοῦσα
 πρὶν,
 1610 οὔνεχ' οὐ ποτ' ἠμέλησε παιδὸς ἀποδίδωσί μοι.
 αἶδε δ' εὖωποι πύλαι μοι καὶ θεοῦ χρηστήρια,
 δυσμενῇ πάροιθεν ὄντα. νῦν δὲ καὶ ρόπτρων
 χέρας
 ἠδέως ἐκκρημνάμεσθα καὶ προσεννέπω πύλας.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

ἦν'ες' οὔνεκ' εὐλογεῖς θεὸν μεταβαλοῦς· αἰὲ γὰρ
 οὖν
 χρόνια μὲν τὰ τῶν θεῶν πως, εἰς τέλος δ' οὐκ
 ἀσθενῇ.

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ὦ τέκνον, στείχωμεν οἴκους.

ION

He gave thee health in travail ; so none knew :
And, when thou hadst borne this child, and cast
him out

In swaddling-bands, bade Hermes in his arms
Snatch him away, and hither waft thy babe ;
And nurtured him, nor suffered him to die.
Now therefore say not that this lad is thine,
That Xuthus in his phantasy may joy,
And thine the substance, lady, be of bliss.
Farewell ye : after this relief from woes
I bring you tidings of a happy lot.

1600

ION

Pallas, Daughter of the Highest, child of Zeus, we
will receive [believe
These thy words with no unfaith, but Loxias do I
Sire to me, and her my mother :—never was this
past belief .

CREUSA

Hear me : Phoebus praise I, whom I praised not in
mine hour of grief, [now restores.
For that whom he set at naught, his child, to me he . 1610
Lovely is his oracle, and fair to me these temple-
doors, [portal-ring,
Hateful though they were aforetime. Now unto the
As I bid his gates my blithe farewell, with loving
hands I cling.

ATHENA

Well dost thou to turn to praises of the God : so is it
still—
Slow the Gods' hands haply are, but mightily at last
fulfil.

CREUSA

Homeward let us pass, my son.

153

ΙΩΝ

ΑΘΗΝΑ

στείχεθ', ἔψομαι δ' ἐγώ.

ΙΩΝ

ἀξία γ' ἡμῶν ὁδουρός.

ΚΡΕΟΤΣΑ

καὶ φιλοῦσά γε πτόλιν.

ΑΘΗΝΑ

εἰς θρόνους δ' ἵζου παλαιούς.

ΙΩΝ

ἄξιον τὸ κτήμά μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ Διὸς Λητοῦς τ' Ἀπολλων, χαῖρ'· ὅτῳ δ'
ἐλαύνεται

1620 συμφοραῖς οἶκος, σέβοντα δαίμονας θαρσεῖν
χρεών·

εἰς τέλος γὰρ οἱ μὲν ἐσθλοὶ τυγχάνουσιν ἀξίων,
οἱ κακοὶ δ', ὥσπερ πεφύκασ', οὔ ποτ' εὖ πρά-
ξειαν ἄν.

ION

ATHENA

Pass on : myself shall following come.

ION

Best way-warden art thou !

CREUSA

Thou who holdest dear our city-home

ATHENE

Seat thee on the ancient throne.

ION

A goodly heritage is mine.

CHORUS

Zeus' and Leto's Son Apollo, hail ! Let him to
powers divine

Render homage undismayed, whose house affliction's
buffets smite :

1620

For the good at last shall overcome, at last attain
their right ;

But the evil, by their nature's law, on good shall
never light.

[Exeunt in procession to marching music.]

HIPPOLYTUS

ARGUMENT

HIPPOLYTA, Queen of the Amazons, bore to Theseus, king of Athens and Troezen, a son whom he named from her, Hippolytus. Now this youth grew up of all men most pure in heart, reverencing chiefly Artemis the Maiden, Goddess of the Chase, and utterly contemning the worship of Aphrodite. Wherefore the wrath of the Queen of Love was kindled against him, and she made Phaedra, his father's young wife, mad with love for him ; and although she wrestled with her malady, and strove to hide it in her heart, till by the fever of it she was brought nigh to death's door, yet in the end it was revealed, and was made destruction to her and to Hippolytus also.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗ

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΚΤΗΝΗΓΩΝ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΤΡΟΙΖΗΝΙΩΝ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝ

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

APHRODITE (or CYPRIIS), *the Queen of Love.*

HIPPOLYTUS, *son of Theseus and Hippolyta Queen of the Amazons.*

PHAEDRA, *daughter of Minos king of Crete, and wife of Theseus.*

NURSE OF PHAEDRA.

THESEUS, *king of Athens and Troezen.*

ARTEMIS, *Goddess of Hunting.*

SERVANT OF HIPPOLYTUS.

MESSANGER, *henchman of Hippolytus.*

CHORUS, *composed of women of Troezen.*

CHORUS of *huntsmen.*

Attendants and handmaids.

SCENE: Before the palace of Theseus at Troezen, where Theseus dwelt, being self-exiled for a year from Athens, to expiate the shedding of the blood of kinsmen who had sought to dethrone him.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΑΦΡΟΔΙΤΗ

- Πολλή μὲν ἐν βροτοῖσι κοῦκ ἀνώνυμος
θεὰ κέκλημαι Κύπρις, οὐρανοῦ τ' ἔσω·
ὅσοι τε πόντου τερμόνων τ' Ἀτλαντικῶν
ναίουσιν εἴσω φῶς ὀρώντες ἡλίου,
τοὺς μὲν σέβοντας τὰμὰ πρεσβεύω κράτη,
σφάλλω δ' ὅσοι φρονοῦσιν εἰς ἡμᾶς μέγα.
ἔνεστι γὰρ δὴ καὶ θεῶν γένει τόδε,
τιμώμενοι χαίρουσιν ἀνθρώπων ὑπο.
δείξω δὲ μύθων τῶνδ' ἀλήθειαν τάχα·
10 ὁ γάρ με Θησέως παῖς, Ἀμαζόνος τόκος
Ἴππόλυτος, ἀγνοῦ Πιθθέως παιδεύματα,
μόνος πολιτῶν τῆσδε γῆς Τροιζηνίας
λέγει κακίστην δαιμόνων πεφυκέναι,
ἀναίνεται δὲ λέκτρα κοῦ ψαύει γάμων·
Φοίβου δ' ἀδελφὴν Ἄρτεμιν Διὸς κόρην
τιμᾶ, μεγίστην δαιμόνων ἡγούμενος·
χλωρὰν δ' ἀν' ὕλην παρθένω ξυνὼν αἰεὶ
κυσὶν ταχείαις θήρας ἐξαιρεῖ χθονός,
μείζω βροτείας προσπεσὼν ὁμιλίας.
20 τούτοισι μὲν νυν οὐ φθονῶ· τί γάρ με δεῖ ;
ἀ δ' εἰς ἔμ' ἡμάρτηκε, τιμωρήσομαι
Ἴππόλυτον ἐν τῇδ' ἡμέρᾳ· τὰ πολλὰ δὲ
πάλαι προκόψασ', οὐ πόνου πολλοῦ με δεῖ.

HIPPOLYTUS

Enter APHRODITE

APHRODITE

Mighty on earth, mighty in heaven, am I
Cypris the Goddess named, a glorious name.
And of all dwellers 'twixt the Pontic Sea
And Atlas' bourn, which look on the sun's light,
I honour them which reverence my power,
But bring the proud hearts that defy me low.
For even to the Gods this appertains,
That in the homage of mankind they joy.
And I will give swift proof of these my words :
For Theseus' son, born of the Amazon, 10
Hippolytus, pure-hearted Pittheus' ward,
Sole mid the folk of this Troezenian land
Sayeth that vilest of the Gods am I ;
Rejects the couch ; of marriage will he none,
But honours Phoebus' sister Artemis,
Zeus' child, and counts her greatest of the Gods ;
And through the greenwood in the Maid's train
still
With swift hounds sweeps the wild beasts from the
earth,
Linked with companionship too high for man. 20
Yet this I grudge not : what is this to me ?
But his defiance of me will I avenge
Upon Hippolytus this day : the path
Well-nigh is cleared ; scant pains it needeth yet.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ἐλθόντα γάρ νιν Πιθέως ποτ' ἐκ δόμων
 σεμνῶν ἐς ὄψιν καὶ τέλη μυστηρίων
 Πανδίοнос γῆν, πατρός εὐγενῆς δάμαρ
 ἰδοῦσα Φαίδρα καρδίαν κατείχετο
 ἔρωτι δεινῷ τοῖς ἐμοῖς βουλευμασι.
 καὶ πρὶν μὲν ἐλθεῖν τήνδε γῆν Τροιζηνίαν,
 30 πέτραν παρ' αὐτὴν Παλλάδος κατόψιον
 γῆς τῆσδε ναὸν Κύπριδος ἐγκαθίστατο,
 ἐρώσ' ἔρωτ' ἔκδημον. Ἴππολύτῳ δ' ἔπι
 τὸ λοιπὸν ὠνόμαζεν ἰδρῦσθαι θεάν.
 ἐπεὶ δὲ Θησεὺς Κεκροπίαν λείπει χθόνα,
 μίασμα φεύγων αἵματος Παλλαντιδῶν,
 καὶ τήνδε σὺν δάμαρτι νανστολεῖ χθόνα,
 ἐνιαυσίαν ἔκδημον αἰνέσας φυγῇ,
 ἐνταῦθα δὴ στένουσα κάκπεπληγμένη
 40 κέντροις ἔρωτος ἢ τάλαιν' ἀπόλλυται
 σιγῇ· σύνοιδε δ' οὔτις οἰκετῶν νόσον.
 ἀλλ' οὔτι ταύτῃ τόνδ' ἔρωτα χρή πεσεῖν
 δείξω δὲ Θησεῖ πρᾶγμα, κάκφανήσεται.
 καὶ τὸν μὲν ἡμῖν πολέμιον νεανίαν
 κτενεῖ πατὴρ ἀραῖσιν, ἃς ὁ πόντιος
 ἄναξ Ποσειδῶν ὥπασεν Θησεῖ γέρας,
 μηδὲν μάταιον εἰς τρὶς εὖξασθαι θεῷ.
 ἢ δ' εὐκλεῆς μὲν, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἀπόλλυται,
 Φαίδρα· τὸ γὰρ τῆσδ' οὐ προτιμήσω κακὸν
 τὸ μὴ οὐ παρασχεῖν τοὺς ἐμούς ἐχθροὺς ἐμοὶ
 50 δίκην τοσαύτην ὥστ' ἐμοὶ καλῶς ἔχειν.
 ἀλλ', εἰσορῶ γὰρ τόνδε παῖδα Θησεῶς
 στείχοντα θήρας μόχθον ἐκλελοιπότα,
 Ἴππολύτον, ἔξω τῶνδε βήσομαι τόπων.
 πολλὺς δ' ἄμ' αὐτῷ προσπόλων ὀπισθόπους
 κῶμος λέλακεν Ἄρτεμιν τιμῶν θεάν

HIPPOLYTUS

For, as from halls of Pittheus once he sought
Pandion's land, to see and to be sealed
In the Great Mysteries, Phaedra, high-born wife
Of his own father, saw him ; and her heart
In fierce love was enthralled by my device.

She, ere she came to this Troezenian land,
Hard by the Rock of Pallas, which looks down 30
On this land, built to me a shrine, for love
Of one afar ; and for Hippolytus' sake
She named it " Love Fast-anchored," for all time.
But since from Cecrops' land forth Theseus passed,
Fleeing the blood-guilt of the sons of Pallas,
And unto this shore with his wife hath sailed,
Submitting unto exile for one year,
Thenceforward, sighing and by stings of love
Distraught, the hapless one wastes down to death
Silent : her malady no handmaid knows. 40
Ah, but not so shall this love's issue fall.
Theseus shall know this thing ; all bared shall be :
And him that is my foe his' sire shall slay
By curses, whose fulfilment the Sea-king
Poseidon gave to Theseus in this boon—
To ask three things of him, nor pray in vain.
And she shall die—O yea, her name unstained,
Yet Phaedra dies : I will not so regard
Her pain, as not to visit on my foes
Such penalty as is mine honour's due. 50

But,—forasmuch as Theseus' son I see
Yonder draw near, forsaking hunting's toil,
Hippolytus,—forth will I from this place.
Ha, a great press of henchmen following shout,
Honouring with songs the Goddess Artemis !

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ὕμνοισιν· οὐ γὰρ οἶδ' ἀνεφγμένας πύλας
 "Αἰδου φάος τε λοίσθιον βλέπων τόδε.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ἔπεσθ' ἄδοντες ἔπεσθε
 τὰν Διὸς οὐρανίαν
 60 "Αρτεμιν, ἧ μελόμεσθα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΚΤΗΝΗΓΩΝ

πότνια πότνια σεμνοτάτα,
 Ζανὸς γένεθλον,
 χαῖρε χαῖρέ μοι, ὦ κόρα
 Λατοῦς "Αρτεμι καὶ Διός,
 καλλίστα πολὺ παρθένων,
 ἧ μέγαν κατ' οὐρανὸν
 ναίεις εὐπατέρειαν αὐλάν,
 Ζανὸς πολύχρυσον οἶκον.
 70 χαῖρέ μοι, ὦ καλλίστα
 καλλίστα τῶν κατ' Ὀλυμπον
 παρθένων, "Αρτεμι.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

σοὶ τόνδε πλεκτὸν στέφανον ἐξ ἀκηράτου
 λειμῶνος, ὦ δέσποινα, κοσμήσας φέρω,
 ἔνθ' οὔτε ποιμὴν ἀξιοῖ φέρβειν βοτὰ
 οὔτ' ἦλθέ πω σίδηρος, ἀλλ' ἀκήρατον
 μέλισσα λειμῶν' ἥρινὸν διέρχεται.
 Αἰδῶς δὲ ποταμίαισι κηπεύει δρόσοις.
 ὅσοις διδακτὸν μηδέν, ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ φύσει
 80 τὸ σωφρονεῖν εἴληχεν εἰς τὰ πάνθ' ὁμῶς,
 τούτοις δρέπεσθαι, τοῖς κακοῖσι δ' οὐ θέμις.
 ἀλλ' ὦ φίλη δέσποινα, χρυσέας κόμης
 ἀνάδημα δέξαι χειρὸς εὐσεβοῦς ἄπο.
 μόνῳ γάρ ἐστι τοῦτ' ἐμοὶ γέρας βροτῶν·
 σοὶ καὶ ξύνειμι καὶ λόγοις σ' ἀμείβομαι,

HIPPOLYTUS

He knows not Hades' gates wide flung for him,
And this day's light the last his eyes shall see.

[*Exit.*

Enter HIPPOLYTUS *and* ATTENDANT HUNTSMEN.

HIPPOLYTUS

Follow on, follow on, ring out the lay
Unto Artemis high enthroned in the sky, 60
Zeus' child, in her keeping who hath us aye.

CHORUS OF HUNTSMEN

O Majesty, Daughter of Zeus, dread Queen,
I hail thee, Artemis, now,
O Leto's Daughter, O Zeus's child,
Loveliest far of the Undefined !
In that great Home of the Mighty Father,
The palace of Zeus, mid the glory-sheen
Of gold—there dwellest thou.
O Fairest, to theeward in greeting I call, 70
Artemis, fairest of Maidens that gather
In Olympus' hall !

HIPPOLYTUS

For thee this woven garland from a mead
Unsullied have I twined, O Queen, and bring.
There never shepherd dares to feed his flock,
Nor steel of sickle came : only the bee
Roveth the springtide mead undesecrate :
And Reverence watereth it with river-dews.
They which have heritage of self-control
In all things, purity inborn, untaught, 80
These there may gather flowers, but none impure.
Now Queen, dear Queen, receive this anadem
From reverent hand to deck thy golden hair ;
For to me sole of men this grace is given,
That I be with thee, converse hold with thee,

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

κλύων μὲν αὐδὴν, ὄμμα δ' οὐχ ὀρών τὸ σόν.
τέλος δὲ κάμψαιμ' ὥσπερ ἡρξάμην βίου.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἄναξ, θεοὺς γὰρ δεσπότης καλεῖν χρεών,
ἄρ' ἂν τί μου δέξαιο βουλευσάντος εὖ ;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

90 καὶ κάρτα γ'· ἡ γὰρ οὐ σοφοὶ φαινοίμεθ' ἄν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οἶσθ' οὖν βροτοῖσιν ὃς καθέστηκεν νόμος ;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδα· τοῦ δὲ καὶ μ' ἀνιστορεῖς πέρι ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

μισεῖν τὸ σεμνὸν καὶ τὸ μὴ πᾶσιν φίλον ;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὀρθῶς γε· τίς δ' οὐ σεμνὸς ἀχθεινὸς βροτῶν ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἐν δ' εὐπροσηγόροισιν ἔστι τις χάρις ;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

πλείστη γε, καὶ κέρδος γε σὺν μόχθῳ βραχεῖ.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἢ καὶ θεοῖσι ταῦτόν ἐλπίζεις τόδε ;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

εἶπερ γε θνητοὶ θεῶν νόμοισι χρώμεθα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

πῶς οὖν σὺ σεμνήν δαίμον' οὐ προσεννέπεις ;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

100 τίν' ; εὐλαβοῦ δὲ μή τι σοῦ σφαλῇ στόμα.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τῇνδ' ἢ πύλαισι σαῖς ἐφέστηκεν Κύπρις.

HIPPOLYTUS

Hearing thy voice, yet seeing not thy face.
And may I end life's race as I began.

SERVANT

Prince,—*Masters* may we call the Gods alone—
Wouldst thou receive of me good counselling?

HIPPOLYTUS

Yea surely : else were I fool manifest.

90

SERVANT

Knowest thou then the stablished wont of men?—

HIPPOLYTUS

Not I thy drift : whereof dost question me?

SERVANT

To hate the proud reserve that owns few friends.

HIPPOLYTUS

Rightly : what proud man is not odious?

SERVANT

And in the gracious is there naught of charm?

HIPPOLYTUS

Yea, much, and profit won with little pains.

SERVANT

And deem'st thou not this same may hold with
Gods?

HIPPOLYTUS

Yea, if men live by laws derived from Gods.

SERVANT

Why not then greet a Goddess worshipful?

HIPPOLYTUS

Whom?—have a care thy lips in no wise err.¹

100

SERVANT

Even Cypris, there above thy portal set.

¹ "The Worshipful Goddesses" was the peculiar title of the Eumenides, whom it was ill-omened to name.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

πρόσωθεν αὐτὴν ἀγνὸς ὦν ἀσπάζομαι.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

σεμνή γε μέντοι καπίσσημος ἐν βροτοῖς.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ἄλλοισιν ἄλλος θεῶν τε κἀνθρώπων μέλει.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

εὐδαιμονοίης νοῦν ἔχων ὅσον σε δεῖ.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐδεῖς μ' ἄρέσκει νυκτὶ θαυμαστὸς θεῶν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τιμαῖσιν, ὦ παῖ, δαιμόνων χρῆσθαι χρεῶν.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

χωρεῖτ', ὀπαδοί, καὶ παρελθόντες δόμους
σίτων μέλεσθε· τερπνὸν ἐκ κυναγίας
110 τράπεζα πλήρης· καὶ καταψήχειν χρεῶν
ἵππους, ὅπως ἂν ἄρμασι ζεύξας ὑπο
βοῶς κορεσθεῖς γυμνάσω τὰ πρόσφορα·
τὴν σὴν δὲ Κύπριν πόλλ' ἐγὼ χαίρειν λέγω.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἡμεῖς δέ—τοὺς νέους γὰρ οὐ μιμητέον—
φρονούντες οὕτως ὥς πρέπει δούλοις λέγειν,
προσευξόμεσθα τοῖσι σοῖς ἀγάλμασι,
δέσποινα Κύπρι. χρὴ δὲ συγγνώμην ἔχειν,
εἴ τίς σ' ὑφ' ἡβης σπλάγχχνον ἔντονον φέρων
120 μάταια βάζει· μὴ δόκει τούτου κλύειν·
σοφωτέρους γὰρ χρὴ βροτῶν εἶναι θεούς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὠκεανοῦ τις ὕδωρ
στάζουσα πέτρα λέγεται
βαπτὰν κύλπισι ῥυτὰν
στρ. α'

HIPPOLYTUS

HIPPOLYTUS

From far I greet her, who am undefiled.

SERVANT

Worshipful is she, glorious among men.

HIPPOLYTUS

Of Gods, of men, each maketh still his choice.

SERVANT

Now prosper thou ;—be needful wisdom thine !

HIPPOLYTUS

No God who hath night-homage pleaseth me.

SERVANT

Guerdons of Gods, my son, ought men to use.

HIPPOLYTUS

Depart, mine henchmen, enter ye the halls,
And set on bread. The full board welcome is
When hunting's done. And one must groom mysteeds, 110
That I may yoke them to the chariot-pole,
Being full of meat, and breathe them in the race.
But to thy Cypris wave I long farewell. [Exit.

SERVANT

But we—who must not tread in steps of youth—
With whispered humbleness most meet for thralls
Make supplication to thine images,
Queen Cypris. It beseems thee to forgive,
If one that bears through youth a vehement heart
Speak folly. Be as though thou heardest not ;
For wiser Gods should be than mortal men. [Exit. 120
Enter CHORUS of Troezenian Ladies.

CHORUS

(*Str. 1*)

A rock there is, wherefrom, as they tell, the springs
of the heart of the Ocean well,
Whence the rifts of the crags overbeetling send

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

παῖγ' ἀν προΐεῖσα κρημνῶν,
 ὄθι μοί τις ἦν φίλα,
 πορφύρεα φάρεα
 ποταμῖα δρόσῳ
 τέγγουσα, θερμᾶς δ' ἐπὶ νῶτα πέτρας
 εὐαλίου κατέβαλλ'. ὅθεν μοι
 130 πρῶτα φάτις ἦλθε δέσποινας·

τειρομέναν νοσερᾷ
 κοῖτα δέμας ἐντὸς ἔχειν
 οἴκων, λεπτὰ δὲ φάρη
 ξανθὰν κεφαλὰν σκιάζειν.
 τριτάταν δέ νιν κλύω
 τάνδε κατ' ἀμβροσίου
 στόματος ἀμέραν
 Δάματρος ἀκτᾶς δέμας ὑγνὸν ἴσχειν,
 κρυπτῷ πάθει θανάτου θέλουσαν
 140 κέλσαι ποτὶ τέρμα δύστανον.

ἦ σύ γ' ¹ ἔνθεος, ὦ κούρα,
 εἴτ' ἐκ Πανὸς εἴθ' Ἑκάτας
 ἦ σεμνῶν Κορυβάντων
 φοιτᾶς, ἦ ματρὸς ὀρείας ;
 σὺ δ' ἀμφὶ τὰν πολύθηρον
 Δίκτυνναν ἀμπλακίαις
 ἀνίερος ἀθύτων πελάνων τρύχει ;
 φοιτᾷ γὰρ καὶ διὰ λίμνας
 χέρσον θ' ὑπὲρ πελάγους
 150 δίναις ἐν νοτίαις ἄλμας.

ἦ πόσιν, τὸν Ἑρεχθιδᾶν
 ἀρχαγόν, τὸν εὐπατρίδαν,

¹ Metzger : for σὺ γὰρ of MSS.

HIPPOLYTUS

For the plunging urns their founts outstreaming :
Even there did I light on a maiden, my friend,
As she drenched the mantles purple-gleaming
In the riverward-glittering spray,
And spread the dye of the Tyrian shell on the rocks
where glowing the sunbeams fell.
Hers were the lips that I first heard say
How wasteth our lady away : 130
(*Ant.* 1)
For a tale they told of a fevered bed, of the feet that
forth of her bower ne'er tread,
Of the dainty-woven veil that is cast
For a darkness over the tresses golden.
Yea, and by this hath the third day past [holden
That the queen from her fair young lips hath with-
The gift of the Lady of Corn,
Keeping her body thereof unfed, as though 'twere
pollution to taste of bread,
With anguish unuttered longing forlorn
One haven to win—death's bourn. 140
O queen, what if this be possession (*Str.* 2)
Of Pan or of Hecate ?—
Of the Mother of Dindymus' Hill ?—
Or the awful Corybant thrill ?
Or hath Artemis found transgression
Of offerings unrendered in thee ? [here ?—
Hath the hand of the Huntress been
For she flasheth o'er mountain and mere,
And rideth her triumph-procession
Over surges and swirls of the sea. 150
Or thy princely lord, in whose leading (*Ant.* 2)
Be the hosts of Erechtheus' race,

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

160 ποιμαίνει τις ἐν οἰκοῖς
κρυπτὰ κοίτα λεχέων σῶν ;
ἢ ναυβάτας τις ἐπλευσεν
Κρήτας ἔξορμος ἀνῆρ
λιμένα τὸν εὐξεινότατον ναύταις,
φάμαν πέμπων βασιλείᾳ,
λύπα δ' ὑπὲρ παθέων
εὐναία δέδεταί ψυχά ;

φιλεῖ δὲ τᾷ δυστρόπῳ γυναικῶν ἐπ' ὧδ.
ἁρμονία κακὰ δύστανος
ἁμηχανία συνοικεῖν
ὠδίνων τε καὶ ἀφροσύνας.
δι' ἐμᾶς ἤξέν ποτε νηδύος ἄδ' αὔρα·
τὰν δ' εὐλοχον οὐρανίαν
τόξων μεδέουσαν ἀύτενν
Ἄρτεμιν, καί μοι πολυζήλωτος αἰεὶ
σὺν θεοῖσι φοιτᾷ.

170 ἀλλ' ἦδε τροφὸς γεραία πρὸ θυρῶν
τῇνδε κομίζουσ' ἔξω μελάθρων·
στυγνὸν δ' ὀφρύων νέφος αὐξάνεται.
τί ποτ' ἔστι μαθεῖν ἔραται ψυχῇ,
τί δεδήληται
δέμας ἀλλόχροον βασιλείας.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

180 ὦ κακὰ θνητῶν στυγεραί τε νόσοι.
τί σ' ἐγὼ δράσω ; τί δὲ μὴ δράσω ;
τόδε σοι φέγγος λαμπρὸν, ὃδ' αἰθρᾷ·
ἔξω δὲ δόμων ἤδη νοσερᾷς
δέμνια κοίτης.

HIPPOLYTUS

Hath one in his halls beguiled,
 That thy couch is in secret defiled ?
 Or hath some sea-trafficker, speeding
 From Crete over watery ways
 To the haven where shipmen would be,
 Brought dolorous tidings to thee
 That hath bowed thee with anguish exceeding
 On thy bed through thy soul's prison-days 160

(*Epode*)

Or shall this be the discord mournful, weirdly
 haunting, [of woman's being ?
 That oft-times jarreth and jangleth the strings
 'Tis the shadow of travail-throes nigh, a delirium
 spirit-daunting : [have felt it shiver :
 Yea, I have known it, through mine own bosom
 But I cried to the Queen of the Bow, to the Helper
 in travail-throe for refuge fleeing ;
 And by grace of the Gods she hearkeneth ever
 my fervent request, she is there to deliver.

But lo, through the doors where cometh the grey- 170
 haired nurse

Leading the stricken one forth of her bowers :
 On her brows aye darker the care-cloud lowers.
 My spirit is yearning to know what is this strange
 curse,

Wherefore the queen's cheek ever is paling,
 And her strength is failing.

Enter PHAEDRA, NURSE, and HANDMAIDS.

NURSE

O afflictions of mortals, O bitter pain !
 What shall I do unto thee, or refrain ?
 Lo here is the light of the sun, the sky :
 Brought forth of the halls is thy bed ; hereby
 Thy cushions lie.

180

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

δεῦρο γὰρ ἐλθεῖν πᾶν ἔπος ἦν σοι·
τάχα δ' εἰς θαλάμους σπεύσεις το πάλιν.
ταχὺ γὰρ σφάλλει κούδενι χαίρεις,
οὐδέ σ' ἀρέσκει τὸ παρόν, τὸ δ' ἀπὸν
φίλτερον ἡγεί.

190 κρεῖσσον δὲ νοσεῖν ἢ θεραπεύειν·
τὸ μὲν ἐστὶν ἀπλοῦν, τῷ δὲ συνάπτει
λύπη τε φρενῶν χερσὶν τε πόνος.
πᾶς δ' ὀδυνηρὸς βίος ἀνθρώπων,
κούκ' ἔστι πόνων ἀνάπαυσις·
ἀλλ' ὅ τι τοῦ ζῆν φίλτερον ἄλλο
σκότος ἀμπίσχων κρύπτει νεφέλαις.
δυσέρωτες δὴ φαινόμεθ' ὄντες
τοῦδ', ὅ τι τοῦτο στίλβει κατὰ γῆν,
δι' ἀπειροσύνην ἄλλου βιότου
κούκ' ἀπόδειξιν τῶν ὑπὸ γαίας·
μύθοις δ' ἄλλως φερόμεσθα.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

200 αἵρετέ μου δέμας, ὀρθοῦτε κἀρα·
λέλυμαι μελέων σύνδεσμα, φίλαι.
λάβετ' εὐπήχεις χεῖρας, πρόπολοι.
βαρὺ μοι κεφαλᾶς ἐπὶ κρανὸν ἔχειν·
ἄφελ', ἀμπέτασον βόστρυχον ὦμοις.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

θάρσει, τέκνον, καὶ μὴ χαλεπῶς
μετάβαλλε δέμας.
ῥᾶον δὲ νόσον μετὰ θ' ἡσυχίας
καὶ γενναίου λήματος οἴσεις·
μοχθεῖν δὲ βροτοῖσιν ἀνάγκη.

HIPPOLYTUS

Hitherward wouldst thou come ; it was all thy moan :
Yet aback to thy bowers wilt thou fret to be gone.
Thou art soon disappointed, thou joyest in naught,
What thou hast cannot please thee ; a thing far-sought

Thy fancy hath caught.

Better be sick than tend the sick :
Here is but one pain ; grief of mind
And toil of hands be there combined.
O'er all man's life woes gather thick ; 190

Ne'er from its travail respite is.
If better life beyond be found,
The darkness veils, clouds wrap it round ;
Therefore infatuate-fond to this

We cling—this earth's poor sunshine-gleam :
Naught know we of the life to come,
There speak no voices from the tomb :
We drift on fable's shadowy stream.

PHAEDRA

Uplift ye my body, mine head upraise.
Friends, faint be my limbs, and unknit be their
bands.
Hold, maidens, my rounded arms and mine hands. 200
Ah, the coif on mine head all heavily weighs :
Take it thence till mine hair o'er my shoulders strays !

NURSE

Take heart, my child, nor in such wild wise
Toss thou thy body so feveredly.
Lighter to bear shall thy sickness be,
If thine high-born courage in calm strength rise :
For the doom of sorrow on all men lies.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

αἰαῖ.

210

πῶς ἂν δροσερᾶς ἀπὸ κρηνίδος
καθαρῶν ὑδάτων πῶμ' ἀρυσαίμαν,
ὑπὸ τ' αἰγείροις ἔν τε κομήτῃ
λειμῶνι κλιθεῖς' ἀναπαυσαίμαν.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὦ παῖ, τί θροεῖς ;
οὐ μὴ παρ' ὄχλῳ τάδε γηρύσει
μανίας ἔποχον ῥίπτουσα λόγον ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

220

πέμπετέ μ' εἰς ὄρος· εἴμι πρὸς ὕλαν
καὶ παρὰ πεύκας, ἵνα θηροφόνοι
στείβουσι κύνες
βαλιαῖς ἐλάφοις ἐγχριμπτόμεναι·
πρὸς θεῶν, ἔραμαι κυσὶ θωῦξαι
καὶ παρὰ χαίταν ξανθὰν ῥίψαι
Θεσσαλὸν ὄρπακ', ἐπίλογχον ἔχουσ'
ἐν χειρὶ βέλος.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

τί πότ', ὦ τέκνον, τάδε κηραίνεις ;
τί κυνηγεσίῳ καὶ σοὶ μελέτῃ ;
τί δὲ κρηναίων νασμῶν ἔρασαι ;
πάρα γὰρ δροσερὰ πύργοις συνεχῆς
κλιτύς, ὅθεν σοι πῶμα γένοιτ' ἂν.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

230

δέσποιν' ἀλίας Ἄρτεμι Λίμνας
καὶ γυμνασίῳ τῶν ἵπποκρότων,
εἶθε γενοίμαν ἐν σοῖς δαπέδοις,
πῶλους Ἐνέτας δαμαλιζομένα.

HIPPOLYTUS

PHAEDRA

Oh but to quaff, where the spray-veil drifteth
O'er taintless fountains, the dear cool stream ! 210
Oh to lie in the mead where the soft wind lifteth
Its tresses—'neath poplars to lie and dream !

NURSE

My child, my child, what is this thou hast cried ?
Ah, speak not thus, with a throng at thy side,
Wild words that on wings of madness ride !

PHAEDRA

Let me hence to the mountain afar—I will hie me
To the forest, the pines where the stag-hounds
follow
Hard after the fleet dappled hinds as they fly me !
Oh, I long to cheer them with hunter's hollo,—
Ah God, were I there !—
And to grasp the Thessalian shaft steel-gleaming, 220
And to swing it on high by my hair outstreaming—
My golden hair !

NURSE

What wouldst thou, my darling, of suchlike things ?
Will naught save the hunt and the hounds content ?
And why art thou yearning for fountain-springs ?
Lo, nigh to thy towers is a soft-sloped bent
With streams for thy drinking dew-besprent.

PHAEDRA

Lady of Limne, the burg looking seaward,
Of the thunder of hoofs on the wide race-courses,
Oh for the plains where the altars to theeward 230
Flame, there to be curbing the Henetan horses !

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

τί τόδ' αὖ παράφρων ἔρριψας ἔπος ;
 νῦν δὴ μὲν ὄρος βᾶσ' ἐπὶ θήρας
 πόθον ἐστέλλου, νῦν δ' αὖ ψαμάθοις
 ἐπ' ἀκυμάντοις πώλων ἔρασαι.
 τάδε μαντείας ἄξια πολλῆς,
 ὅστις σε θεῶν ἀνασειράζει
 καὶ παρακόπτει φρένας, ὦ παῖ.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

240 δύστανος ἐγώ, τί ποτ' εἰργασάμαν ;
 ποῖ παρεπλάγχθην γνώμας ἀγαθᾶς ;
 ἐμάνην, ἔπεσον δαίμονος ἅτα.
 φεῦ φεῦ, τλάμων.
 μαῖα, πάλιν μου κρύψον κεφαλάν·
 αἰδούμεθα γὰρ τὰ λελεγμένα μοι.
 κρύπτε· κατ' ὅσσων δάκρυ μοι βαίνει,
 καὶ ἐπ' αἰσχύναν ὄμμα τέτραπται.
 τὸ γὰρ ὀρθοῦσθαι γνώμαν ὀδυνᾷ,
 τὸ δὲ μαινόμενον κακόν· ἀλλὰ κρατεῖ
 μὴ γιγνώσκοντ' ἀπολέσθαι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

250 κρύπτω· τὸ δ' ἐμὸν πότε δὴ θάνατος
 σῶμα καλύνφει;
 πολλὰ διδάσκει μ' ὁ πολὺς βίотος·
 χρὴν γὰρ μετρίας εἰς ἀλλήλους
 φιλίας θνητοὺς ἀνακίρνασθαι,
 καὶ μὴ πρὸς ἄκρον μυελὸν ψυχῆς,
 εὖλυτα δ' εἶναι στέργηθρα φρενῶν
 ἀπὸ τ' ὥσασθαι καὶ ξυντεῖναι.
 τὸ δ' ὑπὲρ δισσῶν μίαν ὠδίνειν
 ψυχὴν χαλεπὸν βάρος, ὥς κἀγὼ
 260 τῇσδ' ὑπεραλγῶ.

HIPPOLYTUS

NURSE

What speech in thy frenzy outflingest thou ?
The mountain-ward path then fain hadst thou
taken

On the track of the beasts : and thou yearnest now
For the steeds on the sea-sands wave-forsaken !

Of a surety the lore of a seer we lack
To tell what God, child, reineth thee back,
And scourgeth thy spirit from reason's track.

PHAEDRA

O hapless I—what is this I have done ?

Whitherward have I wandered from wisdom's way ? 240
I was mad, by a God's curse overthrown.

Oh ill-starred—well-a-day !

Dear Nurse, veil over mine head once more ;

For I blush for the words from my lips that came.

Veil me : the tears from mine eyes down pour,
And mine eyelids sink for shame.

For anguish wakes when re-dawneth the mind :
Though a curse be madness, herein is it kind,
That the soul that it ruins it striketh blind.

NURSE

I veil thee :—ah that death would veil 250

Me too !—with many a lesson stern

The years have brought, this too I learn—
Be links of mortal friendship frail !

Let heart-strings ne'er together cling,

Nor be indissolubly twined

The chords of love, but lightly joined
For knitting close or severing.

Ah weary burden, where one soul
Travails for twain, as mine for thee !

260

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

βιότου δ' ἄτρεκεῖς ἐπιτηδεύσεις
 φασὶ σφάλλειν πλέον ἢ τέρπειν,
 τῇ θ' ὑγιείᾳ μᾶλλον πολεμεῖν.
 οὕτω τὸ λῖαν ἦσσον ἐπαινῶ
 τοῦ μηδὲν ἄγαν
 καὶ ξυμφήσουσι σοφοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

γύναι γεραιά, βασιλίδος πιστὴ τροφὴ
 Φαίδρας, ὁρῶ μὲν τάσδε δυστήνους τύχας,
 ἄσημα δ' ἡμῖν ἦτις ἐστὶν ἡ νόσος·
 270 σοῦ δ' ἂν πυθέσθαι καὶ κλύειν βουλοίμεθ' ἄν.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδ' ἐλέγχουσ'· οὐ γὰρ ἐννέπειν θέλει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐδ' ἦτις ἀρχὴ τῶνδε πημάτων ἔφν·

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

εἰς ταῦτόν ἦκεις· πάντα γὰρ σιγᾷ τάδε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὥς ἀσθενεῖ τε καὶ κατέξανται δέμας.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

πῶς δ' οὔ, τριταίαν οὖσ' ἄσιτος ἡμέραν·

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πότερον ὑπ' αἴτης ἢ θανεῖν πειρωμένη·

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

θανεῖν· ἀσιτεῖ δ' εἰς ἀπόστασιν βίου.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θαυμαστὸν εἶπας, εἰ τὰδ' ἐξαρκεῖ πόσει.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

κρύπτει γὰρ ἦδε πῆμα κοῦ φῆσιν νοσεῖν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

280 ὁ δ' εἰς πρόσωπον οὐ τεκμαίρεται βλέπων·

HIPPOLYTUS

Ruin, not bliss, say they, shall be
Care's life-absorbing heart-control.

Yea, that way sickness, madness, lies.
Therefore "the overmuch" shall be
Less than "the naught-too-much" for me :
So say I : so shall say the wise.

CHORUS

Thou grey-haired dame, queen Phaedra's loyal nurse,
In sooth I mark her lamentable plight,
Yet what her malady, to us is dark.
Fain would we question thee and hear thereof. 270

NURSE

I know not, though I ask : she will not tell.

CHORUS

Nor what was the beginning of these woes ?

NURSE

The same thy goal : naught sayeth she of all.

CHORUS

How strengthless and how wasted is her frame !

NURSE

No marvel, being three days foodless now.

CHORUS

Madness is this, or set resolve to die ?

NURSE

To die : she fasteth to make end of life.

CHORUS

Strange is thy tale, if this content her lord.

NURSE

Nay, but she hides her pain, nor owns she ails.

CHORUS

Should he not guess ?—one glance upon her face ? 280

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἔκδημος ὦν γὰρ τῇσδε τυγχάνει χθονός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνάγκην προσφέρεις, πειρωμένη
νόσον πυθέσθαι τῇσδε καὶ πλάνον φρενῶν ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

εἰς πᾶν ἀφῦγμαι κούδεν εἴργασμαι πλέον·
οὐ μὴν ἀνήσω γ' οὐδὲ νῦν προθυμίας,
ὥς ἂν παρούσα καὶ σύ μοι ξυμμαρτυρῆς
οἷα πέφυκα δυστυχούσι δεσπότηις.

290

ἄγ', ὦ φίλη παῖ, τῶν πάροιθε μὲν λόγων
λαθώμεθ' ἄμφω, καὶ σύ θ' ἡδίῳν γενοῦ
στυγνὴν ὀφρὺν λύσασα καὶ γνώμης ὁδόν,
ἐγὼ θ' ὅπῃ σοι μὴ καλῶς τόθ' εἰπόμεν
μεθεῖς' ἐπ' ἄλλον εἴμι βελτίῳ λόγον.

κεῖ μὲν νοσεῖς τι τῶν ἀπορρήτων κακῶν,
γυναῖκες αἶδε συγκαθιστάναί νόσον·
εἰ δ' ἔκφορός σοι συμφορὰ πρὸς ἄρσενας,
λέγ', ὥς ἰατροῖς πρᾶγμα μηνυθῇ τόδε.

300

εἰεν· τί σιγᾶς ; οὐκ ἐχρῆν σιγᾶν, τέκνον,
ἀλλ' ἢ μ' ἐλέγχειν, εἰ τι μὴ καλῶς λέγω,
ἢ τοῖσιν εὖ λεχθεῖσι συγχωρεῖν λόγοις.
φθέγξαι τι, δεῦρ' ἄθρησον· ὦ τάλαιν' ἐγώ.
γυναῖκες, ἄλλως τοῦσδε μοχθοῦμεν πόνους,
ἴσον δ' ἄπεσμεν τῷ πρίν· οὔτε γὰρ τότε
λόγοις ἐτέγγεθ' ἦδε νῦν τ' οὐ πείθεται.
ἀλλ' ἴσθι μέντοι—πρὸς τὰδ' αὐθαδεστέρα
γίγνου θαλάσσης—εἰ θανεῖ, προδοῦσα σοὺς
παῖδας πατρώων μὴ μεθέξοντας δόμων,
μὰ τὴν ἄνασσαν ἱππίαν Ἀμαζόνα,
ἢ σοῖς τέκνοισι δεσπότην ἐγείνατο
νόθον φρονοῦντα γνήσι', οἷσθ' ἂν καλῶς,
Ἴππόλυτον,—

HIPPOLYTUS

NURSE

Nay, absent is he from this land of late.

CHORUS

But thou—dost not constrain her, strive to learn
Her malady and wandering of her wit ?

NURSE

All have I tried, and naught the more availed.
Yet will I not even now abate my zeal :
So stand thou by and witness unto me
How true am I to mine afflicted lords.

Come, darling child, the words said heretofore
Forget we both ; more gracious-souled be thou :
Thy lowering brow, thy wayward mood, put by ; 290
And I, wherein I erred in following thee,
Refrain, and unto wiser counsels seek.
If thy disease be that thou mayst not name,
Lo women here to allay thy malady.
But if to men thy trouble may be told,
Speak, that to leeches this may be declared.
Ha, silent ?—silence, child, beseems thee not.
Or thou shouldst chide me if I speak not well,
Or unto pleadings wisely uttered yield.
One word !—look hitherward ! . . . ah, woe is me ! 300
Women, we toil and spend our strength for naught,
And still are far as ever : of my words
Unmelted was she then, nor hearkeneth now.

Howbeit know thou—then be waywarder
Than is the sea,—thy death shall but betray
Thy sons, who shall not share their father's halls—
No, by that chariot-queen, the Amazon,
Who bare to thy sons a bastard over-lord,—
Not bastard-thoughted,—well thou knowest him,
Hippolytus—

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

οἶμοι.

310

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

θιγγάνει σέθεν τόδε ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἀπώλεσάς με, μαῖα, καὶ σε πρὸς θεῶν
τοῦδ' ἀνδρὸς αὐθις λίσσομαι σιγᾶν πέρι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὄρᾱς ; φρονεῖς μὲν εὖ, φρονούσα δ' οὐ θέλεις
παῖδάς τ' ὀνῆσαι καὶ σὸν ἐκσῶσαι βίον.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

φιλῶ τέκν'· ἄλλη δ' ἐν τύχῃ χειμάζομαι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἀγνὰς μὲν, ὦ παῖ, χεῖρας αἵματος φορεῖς ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

χεῖρες μὲν ἀγναί, φρὴν δ' ἔχει μίασμά τι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

μῶν ἐξ ἐπακτοῦ πημονῆς ἐχθρῶν τινός ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

φίλος μ' ἀπόλλυσ' οὐχ ἐκούσαν οὐχ ἐκών.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

320 Θησεύς τιν' ἡμάρτηκεν εἰς σ' ἁμαρτίαν ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

μὴ δρῶσ' ἔγωγ' ἐκείνον ὀφθείην κακῶς.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

τί γὰρ τὸ δεινὸν τοῦθ' ὃ σ' ἐξαίρει θανεῖν ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἔα μ' ἁμαρτεῖν· οὐ γὰρ εἰς σ' ἁμαρτάνω.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὐ δῆθ' ἐκούσά γ', ἐν δὲ σοὶ λελείψομαι.

HIPPOLYTUS

PHAEDRA

Woe's me !

NURSE

It stings thee, this ?

310

PHAEDRA

Thou hast undone me, nurse : by heaven, I pray,
Speak thou the name of this man nevermore.

NURSE

Lo there !—thy wit is sound : yet of thy wit
Thou wilt not help thy sons nor save thy life !

PHAEDRA

I love them : other storms of fate toss me.

NURSE

Sure, thine are hands, my child, unstained with blood ?

PHAEDRA

Pure be mine hands : the stain is on my soul.

NURSE

Not, not of sorcery-spells by some foe cast ?

PHAEDRA

A friend's blow this, unsought of him or me.

NURSE

Hath Theseus wrought against thee any sin ?

320

PHAEDRA

May I be found as clear of wrong to him !

NURSE

What then is this strange thing that deathward
drives thee ?

PHAEDRA

Let be my sin ! Not against thee I sin.

NURSE

Of my will, never ! On thine head my failure !

[Clings to PHAEDRA's hands.

187

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

τί δρᾷς ; βιάζει χειρὸς ἑξαρτωμένη ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

καὶ σὼν γε γονάτων, κοῦ μεθήσομαί ποτε.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

κάκ', ὦ τάλαινα, σοὶ τὰδ', εἰ πεύσει, κακά.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

μεῖζον γὰρ ἢ σοῦ μὴ τυχεῖν τί μοι κακόν ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ὀλεῖ· τὸ μέντοι πρᾶγμ' ἐμοὶ τιμὴν φέρει.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

330 καῖπειτα κρύπτεις χρήσθ' ἱκνουμένης ἐμοῦ ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἐκ τῶν γὰρ αἰσχυρῶν ἐσθλὰ μηχανώμεθα.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὐκουν λέγουσα τιμωτέρα φανεῖ ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἄπελθε πρὸς θεῶν δεξιᾶς τ' ἐμῆς μέθες.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ μοι δῶρον οὐ δίδως ὃ χρῆν.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

δώσω· σέβας γὰρ χειρὸς αἰδοῦμαι τὸ σόν.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

σιγῶμ' ἂν ἤδη· σὸς γὰρ οὐντεῦθεν λόγος.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ὦ τλήμον, οἶον, μῆτερ, ἡράσθης ἔρον,

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὃν ἔσχε ταύρου, τέκνον, ἢ τί φῆς τόδε ;

HIPPOLYTUS

PHAEDRA

Violence to me !—to mine hand clingest thou ?

NURSE

Yea, and thy knees—nor ever will let go !

PHAEDRA

Thy doom, unhappy, shouldst thou hear in mine.

NURSE

What darker doom for me than losing thee ?

PHAEDRA

Death ! Ah, but mine own death shall be mine honour !

NURSE

Still dost thou hide it, when I pray thy good ? 330

PHAEDRA

Yea, for I fashion out of evil good.

NURSE

If then thou tell me, more shall be thine honour.

PHAEDRA

For God's sake hence away : let go mine hand.

NURSE

No !—while thou grantest not the boon my due.

PHAEDRA

I will, in reverence of thy suppliant hand.

NURSE

I am dumb : henceforth thy part it is to speak.

PHAEDRA

O hapless mother¹!—what strange love was thine !

NURSE

Love for the bull, my child ?—or what wouldst name ?

¹ Pasiphaë, of whose unnatural passion the Minotaur was born.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

σύ τ', ὦ τάλαιν' ὄμαιμε, Διονύσου δάμαρ,

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

340 τέκνον, τί πάσχεις ; συγγόνους κακορροθείς ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

τρίτη τ' ἐγὼ δύστηνος ὥς ἀπόλλυμαι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἔκ τοι πέπληγμαι· ποῖ προβήσεται λόγος ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἐκεῖθεν ἡμεῖς οὐ νεωστὶ δυστυχεῖς.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὐδέν τι μᾶλλον οἶδ' ἢ βούλομαι κλύειν.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

φεῦ·

πῶς ἂν σύ μοι λέξεις· ἀμὲρ χρὴ λέγειν ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὐ μάντις εἰμὶ τὰ φανή γινῶναι σαφῶς.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

τί τοῦθ', ὃ δὴ λέγουσιν ἄνθρωποις, ἐρᾶν ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἡδιστον, ὦ παῖ, ταῦτόν ἀλγεινόν θ' ἄμα.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἡμεῖς ἄρ' ἤμεν θατέρῳ κεχρημένοι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

350 τί φῆς ; ἐρᾶς, ὦ τέκνον, ἀνθρώπων τίνος ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ὅστις πόθ' οὐτός ἐσθ', ὃ τῆς Ἀμαζόνος.—

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

Ἴππόλυτον αὐδᾶς ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

σοῦ τάδ', οὐκ ἐμοῦ κλύεις.

HIPPOLYTUS

PHAEDRA

And thou, sad sister, Dionysus' bride¹!

NURSE

What ails thee, child?—dost thou revile thy kin? 340

PHAEDRA

And I the third—how am I misery-wrecked!

NURSE

I am 'wildered all—whereunto tend thy words?

PHAEDRA

To the rock that wrecks us all, yea, from of old.

NURSE

None the more know I that I fain would know.

PHAEDRA

Ah, couldst thou say for me what I must say!

NURSE

No seer am I to interpret hidden things.

PHAEDRA

What mean they when they speak of this—to love?

NURSE

The sweetest thing, my child—the bitterest too.

PHAEDRA

For me, the second only have I proved.

NURSE

What say'st thou?—child, thou lovest—oh, what
man? 350

PHAEDRA

Whate'er his name—'tis he—the Amazon's—

NURSE

Hippolytus!

PHAEDRA

Thou sayest it, not I.

¹ Ariadne, who, for Theseus' sake, was traitress to her father.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οἶμοι, τί λέξεις, τέκνον ; ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας.
 γυναῖκες, οὐκ ἀνασχέτ', οὐκ ἀνέξομαι
 ζῶσ'. ἐχθρὸν ἡμαρ, ἐχθρὸν εἰσορῶ φάος.
 ῥίψω, μεθήσω σῶμ', ἀπαλλαχθήσομαι
 βίου θανούσα· χαίρετ'· οὐκέτ' εἰμ' ἐγώ.
 οἱ σάφρονες γὰρ οὐχ ἐκόντες, ἀλλ' ὅμως
 360 κακῶν ἐρῶσι. Κύπρις οὐκ ἄρ' ἦν θεός,
 ἀλλ' εἴ τι μεῖζον ἄλλο γίγνεται θεοῦ,
 ἥ τήνδε καὶ μέ καὶ δόμους ἀπώλεσεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄιες ὦ, ἔκλυες ὦ
 ἀνήκουστα τᾶς
 τυράννου πάθεα μέλεα θρεομένας.
 ὀλοίμαν ἔγωγε, πρὶν σᾶν, φίλα,
 κατανύσαι φρενῶν. ἰὼ μοι, φεῦ φεῦ.
 ὦ τάλαινα τῶνδ' ἀλγέων·
 ὦ πόνοι τρέφοντες βροτούς.
 ὀλῶλας, ἐξέφηνας εἰς φάος κακά.
 τίς σε παναμέριος ὅδε χρόνος μένει ;
 370 τελευτάσεται τι καινὸν δόμοις.
 ἄσημα δ' οὐκέτ' ἐστὶν οἱ φθίνει τύχα
 Κύπριδος, ὦ τάλαινα παῖ Κρησία.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

Τροιζήνιαι γυναῖκες, αἰ τόδ' ἔσχατον
 οἰκεῖτε χώρας Πελοπίας προνώπιον,
 ἤδη ποτ' αὔπνος νυκτὸς ἐν μακρῷ χρόνῳ
 θνητῶν ἐφρόντισ' ἢ διέφθαρται βίος.
 καὶ μοι δοκοῦσιν οὐ κατὰ γνώμης φύσιν
 πράσσειν κάκιον, ἔστι γὰρ τό γ' εὐφρονεῖν
 380 πολλοῖσιν, ἀλλὰ τῇδ' ἀθρητέον τόδε·
 τὰ χρήστ' ἐπιστάμεσθα καὶ γιγνώσκομεν,

HIPPOLYTUS

NURSE

Woe, child ! What wilt thou say ? Thou hast dealt
me death !

Friends, 'tis past bearing. I will not endure
To live. O hateful life, loathed light to see !
I'll cast away, yield up, my frame, be rid
Of life by death ! Farewell, I am no more.
The virtuous love—not willingly, yet love
The evil. Sure no Goddess Cypris is,
But, if it may be, something more than God, 360
Who hath ruined her, and me, and all this house.

CHORUS

(*Str. to 669-79*)

Hast thou heard ?—the unspeakable tale hast thou
hearkened,

The wail of my lady's anguish-throe ?

O may I die, ah me ! ere I know,

Dear lady, a spirit as thine so darkened.

O misery-burdened, O whelmed in woe !

O troubles that cradle the children of men !

Undone !—all's bared to the daylight's ken.

Ah, weariful season for thee remaining !

Dark looms o'er the household the shadow of doom. 370

Plain now where the star of thy love is waning,

O hapless daughter of Crete's proud home !

PHAEDRA

Troezenian women, ye which here abide

Upon the utmost march of Pelops' land,

Oft sleepless in the weary-wearing night

Have I mused how the life of men is wrecked.

'Tis not, meseems, through inborn folly of soul

They fare so ill,—discretion dwells at least

With many,—but we thus must look hereon :

That which is good we learn and recognise, 380

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἐκπονοῦμεν δ', οἱ μὲν ἀργίας ὕπο,
 οἱ δ' ἡδονὴν προθέντες ἀντὶ τοῦ καλοῦ
 ἄλλην τιν'. εἰσὶ δ' ἡδοναὶ πολλαὶ βίου,
 μακραί τε λέσχει καὶ σχολή, τερπνὸν κακόν,
 αἰδώς τε. δισσαὶ δ' εἰσὶν, ἡ μὲν οὐ κακή,
 ἡ δ' ἄχθος οἴκων. εἰ δ' ὁ καιρὸς ἦν σαφής,
 οὐκ ἂν δύ' ἦσθην ταῦτ' ἔχοντε γράμματα.
 ταῦτ' οὖν ἐπειδὴ τυγχάνω φρονούσ' ἐγώ,
 οὐκ ἔσθ' ὁποῖω φαρμάκῳ διαφθερεῖν
 390 ἔμελλον, ὥστε τοῦμπαλιν πεσεῖν φρενῶν.
 λέξω δὲ καὶ σοὶ τῆς ἐμῆς γνώμης ὁδόν·
 ἐπεὶ μ' ἔρωσ ἔτρωσεν, ἐσκόπουν ὅπως
 κάλλιστ' ἐνέγκαιμ' αὐτόν. ἡρξάμην μὲν οὖν
 ἐκ τοῦδε, σιγᾷν τήνδε καὶ κρύπτειν νόσον.
 γλώσση γὰρ οὐδὲν πιστόν, ἢ θυραῖα μὲν
 φρονήματ' ἀνδρῶν νουθετεῖν ἐπίσταται,
 αὐτὴ δ' ὑφ' αὐτῆς πλείστα κέκτηται κακά.
 τὸ δεύτερον δὲ τὴν ἄνοιαν εὖ φέρειν
 τῷ σωφρονεῖν νικῶσα προύνοησάμην.
 400 τρίτον δ', ἐπειδὴ τοισίδ' οὐκ ἐξήνυτον
 Κύπριν κρατῆσαι, κατθανεῖν ἔδοξέ μοι
 κράτιστον, οὐδεὶς ἀντερεῖ, βουλευμάτων.
 ἐμοὶ γὰρ εἴη μήτε λανθάνειν καλὰ
 μήτ' αἰσχροὶ δρώσῃ μάρτυρας πολλοὺς ἔχειν.
 τὸ δ' ἔργον ἤδη τὴν νόσον τε δυσκλεᾶ,
 γυνή τε πρὸς τοῖσδ' οὐσ' ἐγίγνωσκον καλῶς,
 μίσσημα πᾶσιν. ὥς ὅλοιτο παγκάκως
 ἥτις πρὸς ἄνδρας ἡρξατ' αἰσχύνειν λέχη
 πρώτη θυραίους. ἐκ δὲ γενναίων δόμων
 410 τόδ' ἡρξε θηλείαισι γίγνεσθαι κακόν.
 ὅταν γὰρ αἰσχροὶ τοῖσιν ἐσθλοῖσιν δοκῇ,
 ἢ κάρτα δόξει τοῖς κακοῖς γ' εἶναι καλὰ.

HIPPOLYTUS

Yet practise not the lesson, some from sloth,
And some preferring pleasure in the stead
Of duty. Pleasures many of life there be ;
Long gossip, idlesse,—pleasant evils they ;
And sense of shame—twofold : no ill the one,
But one bows homes to ruin. Were men's choice
clear,

These twain had never borne the selfsame names.

Forasmuch then as I knew this before,
No philtre-spell was like to change mine heart
To make me fall away from this my faith. 390
Thee will I tell the path my reason trod ;—
When love's wound smote me, straight I cast about
How best to bear it ; wherefore I began
Thenceforth to hush my moan, to veil my pang.
For the tongue none may trust, which knoweth well
To lesson rebel thoughts of other men,
Yet harboureth countless evils of its own.
Then did I take thought nobly to endure
My folly, triumphing by self-control.

Lastly, when even so I naught availed 400
To o'ermaster Love's Queen, I resolved to die
As of all counsels best—let none gainsay !
For be it mine to do not good unseen,
Nor ill before a cloud of witnesses.
I knew the deed, the very pang, was shame.
Well knew I too what 'tis to be a woman—
None trust, none love us ! Curses upon her
Who showed the way the first to shame the couch
With alien men ! Ah, 'twas from princely homes
That first this curse on womankind had birth. 410
For, when the noble count their shame their good,
The lowly sure will hold it honourable.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

μισῶ δὲ καὶ τὰς σῶφρονας μὲν ἐν λόγοις,
 λάθρα δὲ τόλμας οὐ καλὰς κεκτημένας.
 αἱ πῶς ποτ', ὦ δέσποινα ποντία Κύπρι,
 βλέπουσιν εἰς πρόσωπα τῶν ξυνευνητῶν
 οὐδὲ σκότον φρίσσουσι τὸν ξυνεργάτην
 τέραμνά τ' οἴκων μή ποτε φθογγὴν ἄφῃ;
 420 ἡμᾶς γὰρ αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἀποκτείνει, φίλοι,
 ὡς μήποτ' ἄνδρα τὸν ἐμὸν αἰσχύνασ' ἄλῳ,
 μὴ παῖδας οὐς ἔτικτον· ἀλλ' ἐλεύθεροι
 παρρησία θάλλοντες οἰκοῖεν πόλιν
 κλεινῶν Ἀθηνῶν, μητρὸς εἵνεκ' εὐκλεεῖς.
 δουλοῖ γὰρ ἄνδρα, καὶ θρασύσπλαγχνός τις ἦ,
 ὅταν ξυνειδῇ μητρὸς ἢ πατρὸς κακά.
 μόνον δὲ τοῦτό φασ' ἀμιλλᾶσθαι βίῳ,
 γνώμην δικαίαν καγαθήν, ὅτῳ παρῇ.
 κακοὺς δὲ θνητῶν ἐξέφην', ὅταν τύχη,
 προθεῖς κάτοπτρον ὥστε παρθένῳ νέᾳ
 430 χρόνος· παρ' οἷσι μήποτ' ὀφθείην ἐγώ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· τὸ σῶφρον ὡς ἀπανταχοῦ καλόν,
 καὶ δόξαν ἐσθλὴν ἐν βροτοῖς καρπίζεται.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

δέσποινα, ἐμοί τοι συμφορὰ μὲν ἀρτίως
 ἢ σὴ παρέσχε δεινὸν ἐξαίφνης φόβον·
 νῦν δ' ἐννοοῦμαι φαῦλος οὐσα· καὶ βροτοῖς
 αἱ δευτέραί πως φροντίδες σοφώτεραι.
 οὐ γὰρ περισσὸν οὐδὲν οὐδ' ἔξω λόγου
 πέπονθας· ὄργαι δ' εἰς σ' ἐπέσκηψαν θεᾶς.
 ἐρᾶς.—τί τοῦτο θαῦμα;—σὺν πολλοῖς βροτῶν
 440 κάπειτ' ἔρωτος εἵνεκα ψυχὴν ὀλεῖς;
 οὐ τάρᾳ λύει τοῖς ἐρώσι τῶν πέλας,
 ὅσοι τε μέλλουσ', εἰ θανεῖν αὐτοὺς χρεῶν·

HIPPOLYTUS

And O, I hate the continent-professed
Which treasure secret recklessness of shame.
How can they, O Queen Cypris, Sea-born One,
Look ever in the faces of their lords,
Nor shudder lest their dark accomplice, night,
And their own bowers may utter forth a voice?

Me—friends, 'tis even this dooms me to die;
That never I be found to shame my lord, 420
Nor the sons whom I bare: but free, with tongues
Unfettered, flourish they, their home yon burg
Of glorious Athens, blushing ne'er for me.
For this crows man, how stout of heart soe'er,
To know a father's or a mother's sin.
And this alone can breast the shocks of life,
An honest heart and good, in whomso found:
But in his hour Time lifts his mirror, and shows
The vile his vileness there, as a girl sees
Her face. With such may I be never found. 430

CHORUS

Lo now, how fair is virtue everywhere,
Which yieldeth fruit of good repute mid men!

NURSE

Queen, thine affliction, suddenly revealed
But now, wrought in me terrible dismay.
Yet I discern my folly now. 'Tis strange
How second thoughts for men are wisest still.
Thine is the common lot, not past cool weighing:
The Goddess's passion-bolts have smitten thee.
Thou lov'st—what marvel this?—thou art as many—
And lo, for love's sake wouldst fling life away! 440
Sooth, 'twere small gain for them which love their
fellows,
Or yet shall love, if help be none save death.

Κύπρις γὰρ οὐ φορητός, ἦν πολλή ρυή·
 ἦ τὸν μὲν εἶκονθ' ἡσυχῇ μετέρχεται,
 ὃν δ' ἂν περισσὸν καὶ φρονούνθ' εὖρη μέγα,
 τοῦτον λαβοῦσα—πῶς δοκεῖς ;—καθύβρισεν.
 φοιτᾷ δ' ἂν αἰθέρ', ἔστι δ' ἐν θαλασσίῳ
 κλύδωνι Κύπρις, πάντα δ' ἐκ ταύτης ἔφυ·
 ἦδ' ἐστὶν ἡ σπείρουσα καὶ διδοῦσ' ἔρον,
 οὐ πάντες ἐσμέν οἱ κατὰ χθόν' ἔκγονοι.
 ὅσοι μὲν οὖν γραφάς τε τῶν παλαιτέρων
 ἔχουσιν αὐτοὶ τ' εἰσὶν ἐν μούσαις αἰεῖ,
 ἴσασι μὲν Ζεὺς ὥς ποτ' ἡράσθη γάμων
 Σεμέλης, ἴσασι δ' ὥς ἀνήρπασέν ποτε
 ἡ καλλιφεγγῆς Κέφαλον εἰς θεοὺς Ἔως
 ἔρωτος εἶνεκ'· ἀλλ' ὅμως ἐν οὐρανῷ
 ναίουσι κοῦ φεύγουσιν ἐκποδῶν θεοὺς,
 στέργουσιν δ', οἶμαι, συμφορᾷ νικώμενοι.
 σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνέξει ; χρῆν σ' ἐπὶ ῥητοῖς ἄρα
 πατέρα φυτεύειν ἢ πὶ δεσπόταις θεοῖς
 ἄλλοισιν, εἰ μὴ τοῦσδε γε στέρξεις νόμους.
 πόσους δοκεῖς δὴ κάρτ' ἔχοντας εὖ φρενῶν
 νοσοῦνθ' ὀρώντας λέκτρα μὴ δοκεῖν ὁρᾶν ;
 πόσους δὲ παισὶ πατέρας ἡμαρτηκόσι
 συνεκκομίζειν Κύπριν ; ἐν σοφοῖσι γὰρ
 τάδ' ἐστὶ θνητῶν, λανθάνειν τὰ μὴ καλά.
 οὐδ' ἐκπονεῖν τοι χρῆν βίον λίαν βροτούς·
 ὃνδὲ στέγην γάρ, ἥς κατηρεφεῖς δοκοί,¹
 κανὼν ἀκριβώσσει' ἂν·² εἰς δὲ τὴν τύχην
 πεσοῦσ' ὅσῃν σὺ πῶς ἂν ἐκνεύσαι δοκεῖς ;
 ἀλλ' εἰ τὰ πλείω χρηστὰ τῶν κακῶν ἔχεις,
 ἄνθρωπος οὔσα κάρτα γ' εὖ πράξιαις ἂν.

¹ Seidler : for MSS. δόμοι.

² Musgrave : for MSS. καλῶς ἀκριβώσειαν.

HIPPOLYTUS

For Cypris crusheth, swooping in her might ;
Yet gently stealeth she on whoso yield.
But whom she findeth wayward, arrogant-souled,
She graspeth, mocketh, past imagining.
Through air she roveth, in the ocean-surge
Is Cypris ; all things have their birth of her.
'Tis she that sows love, gives increase thereof,
Whereof all we that dwell on earth are sprung. 450

Whoso have scrolls writ in the ancient days,
And wander still themselves by paths of song,
They know how Zeus of yore desired the embrace
Of Semele ; they know how radiant Dawn
Up to the Gods snatched Cephalus of yore,
And all for love ; yet these in Heaven their home
Dwell, neither do they flee the face of Gods,
Content, I trow, to be love's vanquished ones.

Thou—wilt not yield ? Thy sire by several treaty
Thee should have gotten, or with other Gods 460
For lords, if thou wilt bow not to these laws.
How many men, think'st thou, and wise men they,
Knowing their beds dishonoured, shut their eyes ?
How many a father in his son's transgression
Playeth love's go-between ?—the maxim this
Of wise men, that dishonour be not seen.
Why should men toil to over-perfect life ?
Lo, even thine hall's roof-beams the craftsman's rule
Can make not utter-true. How thinkest thou,
Who art plunged in fate's deep sea, to swim to land ? 470
Tush—if more good than evil is in thee,
Who art but human, thou shalt do full well,

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ', ὦ φίλη παῖ, λήγε μὲν κακῶν φρενῶν,
 λήξον δ' ὑβρίζουσ'. οὐ γὰρ ἄλλο πλὴν ὕβρις
 τὰδ' ἐστί, κρείσσω δαιμόνων εἶναι θέλεις·
 τόλμα δ' ἐρώσα· θεὸς ἐβουλήθη τάδε.
 νοσοῦσα δ' εὖ πως τὴν νόσον καταστρέφου.
 εἰσὶν δ' ἐπῳδαὶ καὶ λόγοι θελκτήριοι·
 φανήσεται τι τῆσδε φάρμακον νόσου.
 480 ἦ τάρ' ἂν ὀψέ γ' ἄνδρες ἐξεύροιεν ἄν,
 εἰ μὴ γυναῖκες μηχανὰς εὐρήσομεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Φαῖδρα, λέγει μὲν ἦδε χρησιμώτερα
 πρὸς τὴν παροῦσαν συμφοράν, αἰνῶ δὲ σέ.
 ὁ δ' αἶνος οὗτος δυσχερέστερος λόγων
 τῶν τῆσδε καὶ σοὶ μᾶλλον ἀλγίων κλύειν.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

τοῦτ' ἔσθ' ὃ θνητῶν εὖ πόλεις οἰκουμένας
 δόμους τ' ἀπόλλυσ', οἱ καλοὶ λίαν λόγοι.
 οὐ γάρ τι τοῖσιν ὥσὶ τερπνὰ χρὴ λέγειν.
 ἀλλ' ἐξ ὅτου τις εὐκλεῆς γενήσεται.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

490 τί σεμνομυθεῖς ; οὐ λόγων εὐσχημόνων
 δεῖ σ', ἀλλὰ τάνδρὸς—ὥς τάχος διοιστέον,
 τὸν εὐθὺν ἐξειπόντας ἀμφὶ σοῦ λόγον.
 εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἦν σοι μὴ 'πὶ συμφοραῖς βίος
 τοιαῖσδε, σῶφρων δ' οὐσ' ἐτύγχανες γυνή,
 οὐκ ἂν ποτ' εὐνῆς εἶνεχ' ἡδονῆς τε σῆς
 προσῆγον ἂν σε δεῦρο· νῦν δ' ἀγὼν μέγας
 σῶσαι βίον σόν, κοῦκ ἐπίφθονον τόδε.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ὦ δεινὰ λέξας', οὐχὶ συγκλήσεις στόμα,
 καὶ μὴ μεθήσεις αὐθις αἰσχίστους λόγους ;

HIPPOLYTUS

Nay, darling, from thy deadly thoughts refrain,
And from presumption—sheer presumption this,
That one should wish to be more strong than Gods.
In love, flinch not; a God hath willed this thing.
In pain, victorious wrestle with thy pain.
Lo, charms there be, and words of soothing spell.
Some cure for this affliction shall appear.
Sooth, it were long ere *men* would light thereon,
Except we women find devices forth.

480

CHORUS

Phaedra, she speaketh words that more avail .
For this thine imminent plight: yet thee I praise.
But haply this my praise shall gall thee more
Than those her words, and harsher sound to thee.

PHAEDRA

This is it which doth ruin goodly towns
And homes of men, these speeches over-fair.
It needeth not to speak words sweet to ears,
But those whereby a good name shall be saved.

NURSE

Out on thine high-flown talk! No fair-tricked
speech

490

Will stead thee, but a lover!—'tis high time
To strip disguise off, speak plain truth of thee.
For, were thy life not in such desperate case,
Or thou a woman strong in self-control,
Never for thy lust's sake and pleasure I
To this would bring thee: but we must fight hard
Now for thy life, and void of blame is this.

PHAEDRA

Speaker of horrors!—wilt not seal thy lips?
Wilt not refrain from utter-shameful words?

201

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

500 αἴσχυρ', ἀλλ' ἀμείνω τῶν καλῶν τάδ' ἐστί σοι.
κρείσσον δὲ τοῦργον, εἵπερ ἐκώσσει γέ σε,
ἢ τοῦνομ' ᾧ σὺ κατθανεῖ γαυρουμένη.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

καὶ μὴ σε πρὸς θεῶν, εὖ λέγεις γάρ, αἰσχυρὰ δέ,
πέρα προβῆς τῶνδ'· ὡς ὑπείργασμαι μὲν εὖ
ψυχὴν ἔρωτι, τᾶσχυρὰ δ' ἦν λέγης καλῶς,
εἰς τοῦδ' ὃ φεύγω νῦν ἀναλωθήσομαι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

· εἴ τοι δοκεῖ σοι, χρῆν μὲν οὐ σ' ἀμαρτάνειν·
εἰ δ' οὖν, πιθοῦ μοι· δευτέρα γὰρ ἡ χάρις.
510 ἔστιν κατ' οἴκους φίλτρα μοι θελκτήρια
ἔρωτος, ἦλθε δ' ἄρτι μοι γνώβης ἔσω,
ἃ σ' οὐτ' ἐπ' αἰσχυροῖς οὐτ' ἐπὶ βλάβῃ φρενῶν
παύσει νόσου τῆσδ', ἦν σὺ μὴ γένη κακή.
δεῖ δ' ἐξ ἐκείνου δῆ τι τοῦ ποθουμένου
σημεῖον, ἢ λόγον τιν' ἢ πέπλων ἄπο
λαβεῖν, συνάψαι τ' ἐκ δυοῖν μίαν χάριν.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

πότερα δὲ χριστὸν ἢ ποτὸν τὸ φάρμακον ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδ'· ὄνασθαι, μὴ μαθεῖν βούλου, τέκνον.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

δέδοιχ' ὅπως μοι μὴ λίαν φανῆς σοφῇ.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

πάντ' ἂν φοβηθεῖς ἴσθι· δειμαίνεις δὲ τί ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

520 μὴ μοί τι Θησέως τῶνδε μηνύσης τόκφ.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἔασον, ὦ παῖ· ταῦτ' ἐγὼ θήσω καλῶς.
μόνον σύ μοι, δέσποινα ποντία Κύπρι,

HIPPOLYTUS

NURSE

Shameful—yet better than the good for thee. 500
Better this deed, so it but save thy life,
Than that name, whose proud vaunt shall be thy
death.

PHAEDRA

No, by the Gods!—foul words are thy fair words!—
No farther go: I have schooled mine heart to endure
This love: but if thou plead shame's cause so fair,
I shall be trapped in that sin which I flee.

NURSE

If such thy mind, thine heart should not have sinned:
But now—obey me:—'tis the one hope left:—
I have within some certain charms to assuage
Love: 'twas but now they came into my thought. 510
These, not with shame, nor hurt unto thy mind,
Shall lull thy pang, so thou be not faint-hearted.
Howbeit there needs of him thou yearnest for
Some token, or a word, or fragment caught
From vesture, so to knit two loves in one.

PHAEDRA

A salve, or potion, is this charm of thine?

NURSE

I know not: be content with help, not knowledge.

PHAEDRA

I fear lest over-cunning thou shalt prove.

NURSE

Then know thyself all fears. What darest thou?

PHAEDRA

Lest thou show aught of this to Theseus' son. 520

NURSE

Let be, my child: this will I order well.
Only do thou, Queen Cypris, Sea-born One,

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

συνεργὸς εἷης. τᾶλλα δ' οἷ' ἐγὼ φρονῶ
τοῖς ἔνδον ἡμῖν ἀρκέσει λέξαι φίλοις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ἔρωσ Ἔρωσ, ὁ κατ' ὀμμάτων στρ. α'
στάξεις πόθον, εἰσάγων γλυκεῖαν
ψυχᾷ χάριν οὐς ἐπιστρατεύση,
μή μοί ποτε σὺν κακῷ φανείης
μηδ' ἄρρυθμος ἔλθοις.
530 οὔτε γὰρ πυρὸς οὔτ'
ἄστρων ὑπέρτερον βέλος,
οἶον τὸ τᾶς Ἀφροδίτας
ἴησιν ἐκ χερῶν
Ἔρωσ ὁ Διὸς παῖς.

ἄλλως ἄλλως παρά τ' Ἀλφεῷ ἀντ. α'
Φοῖβον τ' ἐπὶ Πυθίοις τεράμνοις
βούταν φόνον Ἑλλὰς αἴ' ἀέξει·
Ἔρωτα δὲ τὸν τύραννον ἀνδρῶν,
τὸν τᾶς Ἀφροδίτας
540 φιλτάτων θαλάμων
κληδοῦχον, οὐ σεβίζομεν,
πέρθοντα καὶ διὰ πάσας
ιόντα συμφορᾶς
θνατοῖς, ὅταν ἔλθῃ.

τὰν μὲν Οἰχαλία στρ. β'
πῶλον ἄζυγα λέκτρων
ἄνανδρον τὸ πρὶν καὶ ἄνυμφον, οἴκων

HIPPOLYTUS

Work with me. Whatso else I have in mind
Shall it suffice to speak to friends within.

[*Exit* NURSE.]

CHORUS

O Eros, O Eros, how melts love's yearning (Str. 1)
From thine eyes, when thy sweet spell witcheth
the heart [thy might !

Of them against whom thou hast marched in
Not me, not me for mine hurt do thou smite,

My life's heart-music to discord turning.

For never so hotly the flame-spears dart, 530

Nor so fleet are the star-shot arrows of light,
As the shaft from thy fingers that speedeth its
flight, [burning,

As the flame of the Love-queen's bolts fierce-
O Eros, the child of Zeus who art !

In vain, O in vain by Alpheus the river (Ant. 1)
And in Phoebus's Pythian shrine hath the land
Of Hellas the blood of her oxen outpoured.

But Eros, but Love, who is all men's lord,

Unto whom Aphrodite is wont to deliver

Her keys, that the doors be unsealed by his hand 540

Of her holy of holies, we have not adored,

Though he marcheth through ruin victory-ward,

Though he raineth calamity forth of his quiver

On mortals against his on-coming that stand.

(Str. 2)

For I call to remembrance Oechalia's daughter,¹

Who, ere Love 'neath his tyrannous car-yoke had
brought her, [hasted,

Had been spouseless and free—overseas how she

¹ Iole, to win whom Hercules sacked Oechalia.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

550 ζεύξας' ἅπ' εἰρεσία,¹ δρομάδα
τὰν Ἄιδος² ὥστε Βάκχαν,
σὺν αἵματι, σὺν καπνῷ
φονίοις θ' ὑμεναίοις
Ἀλκμήνας τόκῳ Κύπρις ἐξέδωκεν
ὦ τλάμων ὑμεναίων.

ὦ Θήβας ἱερὸν ἀντ. β'
τεῖχος, ὦ στόμα Δίρκας,
συνείποιτ' ἂν ἂ Κύπρις οἶον ἔρπει.
560 βροντᾷ γὰρ ἀμφιπύρῳ τοκάδα
τὰν Διογόνιο Βάκχου
νυμφευσαμένην πότμῳ
φονίῳ κατηύνασεν.
δεινὰ γὰρ πάντα γ' ἐπιπνεῖ, μέλισσα δ'
οἷα τις πεπόταται.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

σιγήσατ', ὦ γυναῖκες· ἐξειργάσμεθα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δ' ἔστι, Φαίδρα, δεινὸν ἐν δόμοισι σοῖς ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἐπίσχετ'· αὐδὴν τῶν ἔσωθεν ἐκμάθω.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σιγῶ· τὸ μέντοι φροῖμιον κακὸν τόδε.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

570 ἰὼ μοι, αἰαῖ αἰαῖ·
ὦ δυστάλαινα τῶν ἐμῶν παθημάτων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τίνα θροεῖς αὐδάν ; τίνα βοᾷς λόγον ;
ἔννεπε τίς φοβεῖ σε φάμα, γύναι,
φρένας ἐπίσσυτος.

¹ Matthiae : for ἀπειρεσίαν of MSS.

² Musgrave : for ναῖδ' or αἰδ' of MSS.

HIPPOLYTUS

When Cypris the dear yoke of home had disparted,
Like a bacchanal fiend out of hell that had darted, 550

And with blood, and with smoke of a palace
flame-wasted, [chanted,
And with death-shrieks for hymns at her bridal-feast
By Love's Queen to the son of Alcmena was granted—
Woe, woe for the joys of espousal she tasted !

And ye, O ye ramparts of hallowèd Thebe, (*Ant.* 2)
And ye lips wave-welling of Dirce, might ye be

Witness how dire was the Love-queen's coming,
When a slumber that knoweth not waking was given
Of her spells by the flame-enfolded levin

To the mother of Zeus' seed Bacchus : for dooming 560
Of death had she blent with the bride-chant's singing.
O, the Dread One breatheth on all life, winging
Softly her flight as a bee low-humming.

[*Voices within*]

PHAEDRA

Hush ye, O hush ye, women ! Lost am I !

CHORUS

What is this dread thing, Phaedra, in thine halls ?

PHAEDRA

Peace !—let me hear the voice of them within.

CHORUS

I am dumb : an ominous prelude sure is this.

PHAEDRA

Ah me ! ah me ! alas !

O wretched, wretched !—ah, mine agonies ! 570

CHORUS

What cry dost thou utter ? What word dost thou
shriek ? [speak !

What voice through thy soul thrills terror ?—O

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἀπωλόμεσθα. ταῖσδ' ἐπιστᾶσαι πύλαις
ἀκούσαθ' οἷος κέλαδος ἐν δόμοις πίτνει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σὺ παρὰ κλῆθρα· σοὶ μέλει πομπίμα
φάτις δωμάτων.

580 ἔνεπε δ' ἔνεπέ μοι, τί ποτ' ἔβα κακόν ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ὁ τῆς φιλίππου παῖς Ἀμαζόνος βοᾷ
Ἴππόλυτος, αὐδῶν δεινὰ πρόσπολον κακά.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄχ' ἂν μὲν κλύω, σαφὲς δ' οὐκ ἔχω·
γεγωνεῖ δ' ¹ ὅπα
διὰ πύλας ἔμολεν ἔμολε σοὶ βοά.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

καὶ μὴν σαφῶς γε τὴν κακῶν προμνήστριαν,
τὴν δεσπότου προδοῦσαν ἐξαυδᾷ λέχους.

590

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ᾧμοι ἐγὼ κακῶν· προδέδοσαι, φίλα.
τί σοι μήσομαι ;
τὰ κρυπτὰ γὰρ πέφηνε, διὰ δ' ὄλλυσαι.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

αἰαῖ, ἔ ἔ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρόδοτος ἐκ φίλων.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἀπώλεσέν μ' εἰποῦσα συμφορὰς ἐμάς,
φίλως, καλῶς δ' οὐ τήνδ' ἰωμένη νόσον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς οὖν ; τί δράσεις, ὦ παθοῦς ἁμήχανα ;

¹ Murray : for ἔχω γεγωνεῖν.

HIPPOLYTUS

PHAEDRA

I am undone ! O stand ye by these doors,
And hear what clamour clasheth in the house.

CHORUS

Nay, thou art thereby : sped forth is the cry from
the palace for thee.

O tell me what horror rushed out—tell it me ! 580

PHAEDRA

The son of the Amazon, Hippolytus,
Shouts, hurling fearful curses at mine handmaid.

CHORUS

Yea surely a noise do I hear, yet to me naught sound-
eth clear :

But to thee through the doors there came, there came
A shout of anger, a cry of shame.

PHAEDRA

Ah clear—ah clear !—yea, pandar of foul sin,
Traitor to her lord's bed, he calleth her. 590

CHORUS

Woe ! Thou art betrayed, beloved one !
What shall I counsel ? Thy secret is bared : thou art
wholly undone.

PHAEDRA

Woe's me ! ah woe !

CHORUS

From the hand that loved came the traitor's blow.

PHAEDRA

She hath undone me, telling mine affliction :
Her love sought by my shame to heal my pain.

CHORUS

What wilt thou do, O thou in desperate plight ?

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

600 οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἓν, κατθανεῖν ὅσον τάχος
τῶν νῦν παρόντων πημάτων ἄκος μόνον.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὦ γαῖα μήτερ ἡλίου τ' ἀναπτυχαί,
οἷων λόγων ἄρρητον εἰσήκουσ' ὅπα.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

σίγησον, ὦ παῖ, πρίν τιν' αἰσθέσθαι βοῆς.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστ' ἀκούσας δεῖν' ὅπως σιγήσομαι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ναὶ πρὸς σε τῆς σῆς δεξιᾶς εὐωλένου.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐ μὴ προσοίσεις χεῖρα μηδ' ἄψει πέπλων ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὦ πρὸς σε γονάτων, μηδαμῶς μ' ἐξεργάση.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

τί δ', εἵπερ ὡς φῆς μηδὲν εἴρηκας κακόν ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὁ μῦθος, ὦ παῖ, κοινὸς οὐδαμῶς ὅδε.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

610 τά τοι κάλ' ἐν πολλοῖσι κάλλιον λέγειν.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὦ τέκνον, ὅρκους μηδαμῶς ἀτιμάσης.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ἡ γλῶσσ' ὁμώμοχ', ἡ δὲ φρὴν ἀνώμοτος.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὦ παῖ, τί δράσεις ; σοὺς φίλους διεργάσει ;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ἀπέπτυσ'· οὐδεὶς ἄδικός ἐστί μοι φίλος.

HIPPOLYTUS

PHAEDRA

No way save one I know—straightway to die—
The one cure for the ills that compass me.

600

Enter HIPPOLYTUS, followed by the NURSE.

HIPPOLYTUS

O mother Earth, unveilings of the sun,
What words unutterable have I heard!

NURSE

Hush, O my son, ere one have heard thy cry.

HIPPOLYTUS

I have heard horrors—should I hold my peace?

NURSE

Yea, I beseech thee by thy fair right hand.

HIPPOLYTUS

Hence with thine hand!—touch not my vesture thou.

NURSE

Oh, by thy knees, do not—ah, slay me not!

HIPPOLYTUS

How, if thou hast said no wrong, as thou dost say?

NURSE

No tale is this, my son, for all men's ears.

HIPPOLYTUS

Tush, a fair tale is fairer told to the world.

610

NURSE

My son, thine oath!—dishonour not thine oath.

HIPPOLYTUS

My tongue hath sworn: no oath is on my soul.

NURSE

O son, what wilt thou do?—wilt slay thy friends?

HIPPOLYTUS

Avaunt the word!—no villain is my friend.

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P 2

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

σύγγνωθ'· ἄμαρτεῖν εἰκὸς ἀνθρώπους, τέκνον.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὦ Ζεῦ, τί δὴ κίβδηλον ἀνθρώποις κακὸν
 γυναῖκας εἰς φῶς ἡλίου κατῴκισας ;
 εἰ γὰρ βρότειον ἤθελες σπείραι γένος,
 οὐκ ἐκ γυναικῶν χρῆν παρασχέσθαι τόδε,
 620 ἀλλ' ἀντιθέντας σοῖσιν ἐν ναοῖς βροτοῦς
 ἢ χρυσὸν ἢ σίδηρον ἢ χαλκοῦ βάρος
 παίδων πρίασθαι σπέρμα, τοῦ τιμήματος
 τῆς ἀξίας ἕκαστον· ἐν δὲ δώμασι
 ναίειν ἐλευθέροισι θηλειῶν ἄτερ·
 [νῦν δ' εἰς δόμους μὲν πρῶτον ἄξεσθαι κακὸν
 μέλλοντες ὄλβον δωμάτων ἐκτείνομεν.]¹
 τούτῳ δὲ δῆλον ὡς γυνὴ κακὸν μέγα·
 προσθεῖς γὰρ ὁ σπείρας τε καὶ θρέψας πατὴρ
 φερνὰς ἀπώκισ', ὡς ἀπαλλαχθῆ κακοῦ·
 630 ὁ δ' αὖ λαβὼν ἀτηρὸν εἰς δόμους φυτὸν
 γέγηθε κόσμον προστιθεὶς ἀγάλματι
 καλὸν κακίστῳ καὶ πέπλοις ἐκπονεῖ
 δύστηνος, ὄλβον δωμάτων ὑπεξελῶν.
 ἔχει δ' ἀνάγκην, ὥστε κηδεύσας καλοῖς
 γαμβροῖσι χαίρων σῶζεται πικρὸν λέχος,
 ἢ χρηστὰ λέκτρα, πειθεροῦς δ' ἀνωφελεῖς
 λαβὼν πιέζει τὰγαθὸν τὸ δυστυχές.
 ῥᾶστον δ' ὅτῳ τὸ μηδέν, ἀλλ' ἀνωφελὲς
 εἴηθ' ἴα κατ' οἶκον ἵδρυται γυνή.
 640 σοφὴν δὲ μισῶ· μὴ γὰρ ἔν γ' ἐμοῖς δόμοις
 εἴη φρονούσα πλείον ἢ γυναῖκα χρή.
 τὸ γὰρ πανοῦργον μᾶλλον ἐντίκτει Κύπρις
 ἐν ταῖς σοφαῖσιν· ἢ δ' ἀμήχανος γυνή

¹ 625-6 are generally rejected as spurious.

HIPPOLYTUS

NURSE

Forgive, son : men are men, they needs must err.

HIPPOLYTUS

Why hast thou given a home beneath the sun,
Zeus, unto woman, specious curse to man ?
For, were thy will to raise a mortal seed,
This ought they not of women to have gotten,
But in thy temples should they lay its price, 620
Or gold, or iron, or a weight of bronze,
And so buy seed of children, every man
After the worth of that his gift, and dwell
Free in free homes unvexed of womankind.

But now—soon as we go about to bring
This bane to the home, we hurl to earth its weal.
Hereby is woman proved a grievous curse—
He, who begat and reared her, banishes,
Yea, adds a dower, to rid him of his bane ;
While he which taketh home the noisome weed 630
Rejoices, decks with goodly bravery
The loathly image, and tricks out with robes,—
Filching away, poor wretch ! his household's wealth.
He may not choose : who getteth noble kin
With her, content must stomach his sour feast :
Who getteth a good wife, but worthless kin,
Must muffle up the evil 'neath the good.

Happiest who wins a cipher, in whose halls
A brainless thing is throned in uselessness.
But the keen-witted hate I : in mine house 640
Ne'er dwell one subtler than is woman's due ;
For Cypris better brings to birth her mischief
In clever women : the resourceless 'scapes

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

γνώμη βραχεία μωρίαν ἀφηρέθη.

650 χρῆν δ' εἰς γυναῖκα πρόσπολον μὲν οὐ περᾶν,
 ἀφθογγα δ' αὐταῖς συγκατοικίζειν δάκη
 θηρῶν, ἵν' εἶχον μήτε προσφωνεῖν τινα
 μήτ' ἐξ ἐκείνων φθέγμα δέξασθαι πάλιν.
 νῦν δ' αἱ μὲν ἔνδον δρώσιν αἱ κακαὶ κακὰ
 βουλευματ', ἔξω δ' ἐκφέρουσι πρόσπολοι.
 660 ὥς καὶ σύ γ' ἡμῖν πατρός, ὦ κακὸν κᾶρα,
 λέκτρων ἀθίκτων ἦλθες εἰς συναλλαγὰς·
 ἀγὼ ῥυτοῖς νασμοῖσιν ἐξομόρξομαι,
 εἰς ὧτα κλύζων. πῶς ἂν οὖν εἶην κακός,
 ὃς οὐδ' ἀκούσας τοιάδ' ἀγνεύειν δοκῶ ;
 εὖ δ' ἴσθι, τοῦμόν σ' εὖσεβες σφάζει, γύναι·
 εἰ μὴ γὰρ ὄρκοις θεῶν ἄφρακτος ἠρέθην,
 οὐκ ἂν ποτ' ἔσχον μὴ οὐ τὰδ' ἐξειπεῖν πατρί.
 νῦν δ' ἐκ δόμων μὲν, ἔστ' ἂν ἔκδημος χθονὸς
 660 Θεσεύς, ἄπειμι· σῖγα δ' ἔξομεν στόμα.
 θεᾶσομαι δὲ σὺν πατρός μολῶν ποδὶ
 πῶς νιν προσόψει καὶ σὺ καὶ δέσποινα σή·
 τῆς σῆς δὲ τόλμης εἶσομαι γεγευμένος.

ὄλοισθε. μισῶν δ' οὐποτ' ἐμπλησθήσομαι
 γυναῖκας, οὐδ' εἴ φησί τίς μ' αἰεὶ λέγειν·
 αἰεὶ γὰρ οὖν πῶς εἰσι κακέϊναι κακαί.
 ἢ νῦν τις αὐτὰς σωφρονεῖν διδαξάτω,
 ἢ καμ' ἑάτω ταῖσδ' ἐπεμβαίνειν ὑεί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τάλανες ὦ κακοτυχεῖς
 γυναικῶν πότμοι.

ἀντ.

670 τίν' αὖ νῦν τέχνην ἔχομεν ἢ λόγους
 σφαλεῖσαι κάθαμμα λύειν λόγον ;

HIPPOLYTUS

That folly by the short-weight of her wit.

Handmaids should ne'er have had access to wives,
But brutes, with teeth, no tongue, should dwell
with them,

That so they might not speak to any one,
Nor win an answering word from such as these.
But now the vile ones weave vile plots within,
And out of doors their handmaids bear the web : 650
As thou hast come, foul quean, to tender me
Commerce in mine own father's sacred couch !—
Words that with fountain-streams I'll wash away,
Sluicing mine ears. How should I be so vile,
Who even with hearing count myself defiled ?
Woman, I fear God : know, that saveth thee.
For, had I not by oaths been trapped unwares,
I had ne'er forborne to tell this to my sire.
Now from mine home, while Theseus yet is far,
I go, and I will keep my lips from speech. 660
But—with my father I return, to see
How thou wilt meet his eye, thou and thy mistress,
And so have taste of thy full shamelessness.

Curse ye ! My woman-hate shall ne'er be sated,
Not though one say that this is all my theme :
For they be ever strangely steeped in sin.
Let some one now stand forth and prove them
chaste,
Or leave me free to trample on them ever. [*Exit.*]

CHORUS

(*Ant. to 362-72*)

O drear dark doom that on women hath lighted !
By what cunning of pleading, when feet once
trip, 670
Shall we loose the accuser's iron grip ?

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἐτύχομεν δίκας· ἰὼ γὰ καὶ φῶς.
 πᾶ ποτ' ἐξαλύξω τύχας ;
 πῶς δὲ πῆμα κρύψω, φίλαι ;
 τίς ἂν θεῶν ἄρωγός ἢ τίς ἂν βροτῶν
 πάρεδρος ἢ ξυνεργὸς ἀδίκων ἔργων
 φανείη ; τὸ γὰρ παρ' ἡμῖν πάθος
 παρὸν δυσεκπέρατον ἔρχεται βίου.
 κακοτυχεστάτα γυναικῶν ἐγώ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

680 φεῦ φεῦ· πέπρακται, κοῦ κατώρθωνται τέχναι,
 δέσποινα, τῆς σῆς προσπόλου, κακῶς δ' ἔχει.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ὦ παγκακίστη καὶ φίλων διαφθορεῦ,
 οἷ' εἰργάσω με. Ζεὺς σε γεννήτωρ ἐμὸς
 πρόρριζον ἐκτρίψειεν οὐτάσας πυρί.
 οὐκ εἶπον, οὐ σῆς προὔνοησάμην φρενός,
 σιγᾶν ἐφ' οἷσι νῦν ἐγὼ κακύνομαι ;
 σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνέσχου· τοιγὰρ οὐκέτ' εὐκλεεῖς
 θανούμεθ'. ἀλλὰ δεῖ με δὴ καινῶν λόγων.
 690 οὗτος γὰρ ὀργῇ συντεθηγμένος φρένας
 ἐρεῖ καθ' ἡμῶν πατρὶ σὰς ἀμαρτίας,
 ἐρεῖ δὲ Πιτθεῖ τῷ γέροντι συμφοράς,
 πλήσει δὲ πᾶσαν γαίαν αἰσχίστων λόγων.
 ὄλοιο καὶ σὺ χῶστις ἄκοντας φίλους
 πρόθυμός ἐστι μὴ καλῶς εὐεργετεῖν.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

δέσποινα, ἔχεις μὲν τὰ μὰ μέμψασθαι κακά·
 τὸ γὰρ δάκνον σου τὴν διάγνωσιν κρατεῖ·
 ἔχω δὲ ἀγῶ πρὸς τὰδ', εἰ δέξει, λέγειν.
 ἔθρεψά σ' εὖνους τ' εἰμί· τῆς νόσου δέ σοι
 ζητοῦσα φάρμαχ' ἡῦρον οὐχ ἀβουλόμην.

HIPPOLYTUS

PHAEDRA

O earth, O sun, I am justly requited !

Through the snares of calamity how shall I slip ?
How, friends, shall I cloke my woe, how hide ?
What God or what man shall stand forth on my side,
Shall consent in my sin to be made partaker ?

For all life's anguish, and all life's shame
Are upon me, and overwhelm like a shipwrecking breaker !
Most accurst of my fate among women I am.

CHORUS

Woe, woe ! 'Tis done. Queen, it hath naught availed, 680
Thy bower-maid's device : 'tis ruin all.

PHAEDRA

Vilest of vile ! destroyer of thy friends !
How hast thou ruined me ! May Zeus my sire
Smite thee with flame, blast thee to nothingness !
Did I not tell thee— not divine thy purpose ?—
To speak not that whereby I am now dishonoured ?
But thou wouldst not forbear. I shall not now
Even die unshamed ! (*A pause*)

Some new plea must I find.
For yonder boy with soul keen-edged with wrath
Shall to his sire accuse me of thy sin,
Shall tell to aged Pittheus my mischance,
Shall blaze the shameful tale through every land.
Curses on thee, and whoso thrusteth in
To do base service to unwilling friends !

690

NURSE

Mistress, thou mayst revile mine evil work,
For rankling pain bears thy discernment down :
Yet somewhat might I answer, wouldst thou hear.
I nursed thee, loved thee, sought for thy disease
A healing balm,—and found not that I would.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

700

εἰ δ' εὖ γ' ἔπραξα, κάρτ' ἂν ἐν σοφοῖσιν ἦ·
πρὸς τὰς τύχας γὰρ τὰς φρένας κεκτήμεθα.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

ἦ γὰρ δίκαια ταῦτα κἄξαρκοῦντά μοι,
τρώσασαν ἡμᾶς εἴτα συγχωρεῖν λόγοις ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

μακρηγοροῦμεν· οὐκ ἐσωφρόνουν ἐγώ,
ἀλλ' ἔστι κἄκ τῶνδ' ὥστε σωθῆναι, τέκνον.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

παῦσαι λέγουσα· καὶ τὰ πρὶν γὰρ οὐ καλῶς
παρήνεσάς μοι κἄπεχειρήσας κακά.
ἀλλ' ἐκποδῶν ἄπελθε καὶ σαυτῆς πέρι
φρόντιζ'· ἐγὼ δὲ τὰ μὰ θήσομαι καλῶς.
710 ὑμεῖς δέ, παῖδες εὐγενεῖς Τροιζήνιαι,
τοσόνδε μοι παράσχετ' ἐξαιτουμένη,
σιγῇ καλύπτειν ἀνθάδ' εἰσηκούσατε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄμνυμι σεμνὴν Ἄρτεμιν Διὸς κόρην,
μηδὲν κακῶν σὼν εἰς φάος δείξειν ποτέ.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

καλῶς ἔλεξας. ἐν δὲ † προστρέπουσ'† ἐγὼ
ἠϋρῆκα δῆτα τῆσδε συμφορᾶς ἄκος,
ὥστ' εὐκλεᾶ μὲν παισὶ προσθεῖναι βίον,
αὐτὴ δ' ὄνασθαι πρὸς τὰ νῦν πεπτωκότα.
οὐ γάρ ποτ' αἰσχυρῶ γε Κρησίους δόμους,
720 οὐδ' εἰς πρόσωπον Θησέως ἀφίξομαι
αἰσχροῖς ἐπ' ἔργοις εἵνεκα ψυχῆς μιᾶς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

μέλλεις δὲ δῆ τι δρᾶν ἀνήκεστον κακόν ;

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

θανεῖν· ὅπως δέ, τοῦτ' ἐγὼ βουλεύσομαι.

HIPPOLYTUS

Had I sped well, right wise had I been held ; 700
For, as we speed, so is our wisdom's fame.

PHAEDRA

Ha ! is this just ?—should this suffice me now,
To have stabbed me, and then close in strife of words ?

NURSE

We waste the time in speech. I was not wise.
Yet even from this there is escape, my child.

PHAEDRA

Peace to thy talk. Thy counsel heretofore
Was shame, and mischief thine endeavour was.
Hence from my sight : for thine own self take
thought.

I with my needs will deal—and honourably.

[*Exit* NURSE.]

But ye, O Troezen's daughters nobly born, 710
Grant to my supplication this, but this—
With silence veil what things ye here have heard.

CHORUS

I swear by reverend Artemis, Zeus' child,
Never to bare to light of thine ills aught.

PHAEDRA

Thou hast well said. Now, as I muse, I find
One refuge, one, from this calamity,
So to bequeath my sons a life of honour,
And what I may from this day's ruin save.
For never will I shame the halls of Crete,
Nor will I meet the face of Theseus ever, 720
For one poor life's sake, after all this shame.

CHORUS

Ah, wilt thou do a deed of ill past cure ?

PHAEDRA

Die will I. How—for this will I take thought.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

εὐφημος ἴσθι.

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

καὶ σύ γ' εὖ με νουθέτει.

ἐγὼ δὲ Κύπριν, ἣπερ ἐξόλλυσί με,
 ψυχῆς ἀπαλλαχθεῖσα τῇδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ
 τέρψω· πικροῦ δ' ἔρωτος ἡσσηθήσομαι.
 ἀτὰρ κακὸν γε χᾶτέρῳ γενήσομαι
 730 θανούσ', ἵν' εἰδῇ μὴ 'πὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖς κακοῖς
 ὑψηλὸς εἶναι· τῆς νόσου δὲ τῆσδέ μοι
 κοινῇ μετασχὼν σωφρονεῖν μαθήσεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἡλιβάτοις ὑπὸ κευθμῶσι γενοίμαν, στρ. α'
 ἵνα με πτεροῦσαν ὄρνιν
 θεὸς εἰνὶ ποταναῖς ἀγέλαις θείῃ·
 ἀρθείην δ' ἐπὶ πόντιον
 κύμα τᾶς Ἀδριηνᾶς
 ἀκτᾶς Ἠριδανοῦ θ' ὕδωρ·
 740 ἔνθα πορφύρεον σταλάσσουσ'
 εἰς οἶδμα πατρὸς τριτάλαιнай
 κόραι Φαέθοντος οἴκτῳ δακρύνων
 τὰς ἠλεκτροφαεῖς αὐγάς.

Ἐσπερίδων δ' ἐπὶ μηλόσπορον ἀκτὰν ἀντ. α'
 ἀνύσαιμι τᾶν αἰοιδῶν,
 ἵν' ὁ ποντομέδων πορφυρέας λίμνας
 ναύταις οὐκέθ' ὁδὸν νέμει,
 σεμνὸν τέρμονα κύρων
 οὐρανοῦ, τὸν Ἄτλας ἔχει,
 κρῆναί τ' ἀμβρόσιαι χέονται
 750 Ζανὸς μελάνθρων παρὰ κοίταις,
 ἵν' ἁ βιόδωρος αὖξει ζαθέα
 χθὼν εὐδαιμονίαν θεοῖς.

HIPPOLYTUS

CHORUS

Ah hush !

PHAEDRA

O yea, advise me wisely thou !

But I shall gladden Cypris my destroyer
By fleeting out of life on this same day,
And vanquished so by bitter love shall be.
Yet in my death Will I become the bane
Of one beside, that he may triumph not
Over my woes, and, taking of my pain, 730
His share, may learn sound wisdom's temperance.

[*Exit* PHAEDRA.]

CHORUS

Under the arched cliffs O were I lying, (Str. 1)
That there to a bird might a God change me,
And afar mid the flocks of the winged things flying
Over the swell of the Adrian sea [ing,
I might soar—and soar,—upon poised wings dream-
O'er the strand where Eridanus' waters be,
Where down to the sea-swell purple-gleaming
The tears of the Sun-god's daughters are streaming,
Of the thrice-sad sisters for Phaëthon sighing, 740
Star-flashes of strange tears amber-beaming !

(Ant. 1)

O to win to the strand where the apples are growing
Of the Hesperid chanters kept in ward,
Where the path over Ocean purple-glowing
By the Sea's Lord is to the seafarer barred !
O to light where Atlas hath aye in his keeping
The bourn twixt earth and the heavens bestarred,
Where the fountains ambrosial sunward are leaping
By the couches where Zeus in his halls lieth sleeping,
Where the bounty of Earth the life-bestowing 750
The bliss of the Gods ever higher is heaping !

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ὦ λευκόπτερε Κρησία
 πορθμῖς, ἃ διὰ πόντιον
 κῦμ' ἀλίκτυπον ἄλμας
 ἐπόρευσας ἐμὰν ἀνασσαν
 ὀλβίων ἀπ' οἴκων,
 κακονυμφοτάταν ὄνασιν.
 ἦ γὰρ ἀπ' ἀμφοτέρων
 ἃ Κρησίας ἐκ γᾶς δύσορνις
 760 ἔπτ' ἐπὶ κλεινὰς Ἀθήνας,
 Μουνίχου δ' ἀκταῖσιν ἐκδή-
 σαντο πλεκτὰς πεισμάτων ἀρ-
 χὰς ἐπ' ἀπείρου τε γᾶς ἔβασαν.

στρ. β'

ἀνθ' ὧν οὐχ ὀσίων ἐρώ-
 των δεινὰ φρένας Ἀφροδί-
 τας νόσῳ κατεκλάσθη·
 χαλεπᾷ δ' ὑπέραντλος οὔσα
 συμφορᾷ, τεράμνων
 770 ἀπὸ νυμφιδίων κρεμαστὸν
 ἄψεται ἀμφὶ βρόχον
 λευκᾷ καθαρμόζουσα δείρα,
 δαίμονα στυγνὰν καταιδε-
 σθεῖσα, τάν τ' εὐδοξον ἀνθαι-
 ρουμένα φάμαν, ἀπαλλάσ-
 σουσά τ' ἀλγεινὸν φρενῶν ἔρωτα.

ἀντ. β'

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ (ἴσωθεν)

ιοὺν ἰού·
 βοηδρομεῖτε πάντες οἱ πέλας δόμων·
 ἐν ἀγχόναῖς δέσποινα, Θησέως δάμαρ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ, πέπρακται· βασιλῆς οὐκέτ' ἔστι δὴ
 γυνή, κρεμαστοῖς ἐν βρόχοις ἡρτημένη.

HIPPOLYTUS

(Str. 2)

O white-winged galley from Crete's far shore,
 Whose keel over deep-sea surges speeding,
 Through their flying brine and their battle-roar,
 Onward and onward my lady bore,
 From a bliss-fraught palace a princess leading
 To the joy of a bridal of woe exceeding!—
 For, a bird ill-boding, thy sail flitted o'er
 With the curse of the Cretan land unto Athens'
 glorious strand, 760
 Till the seafarers lashed to the beach Munychian
 the hawser-band,
 And sprang unto earth's firm floor.

Wherefore, with love-pangs all unblest (Ant. 2)
 For her gift, entered in Aphrodite, wringing
 Her heart-strings asunder, a fearful guest.
 Like a wrecked ship sinking, disaster-oppressed
 Over her bride-bower's rafters flinging
 The noose, shall she cast the coil close-clinging
 Round the neck that was whitest and loveliest, 770
 Because that with shuddering shame she shrank from
 a loathed name,
 And she chose, in its stead, the stainless renown of
 a wife's fair fame,
 And, for anguish of love, heart-rest.

[*A cry within*]

*Run to the rescue, all ye nigh the house !
 In the strangling noose is Theseus' wife, our mistress !*

CHORUS

Woe ! Woe ! 'Tis done ! No more—no more is she,
 The queen—in yon noose rafter-hung upcaught !

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ

780

οὐ σπεύσεται ; οὐκ οἶσει τις ἀμφιδέξιον
σίδηρον, ᾧ τόδ' ἄμμα λύσομεν δέρης ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

φίλαι, τί δρῶμεν ; ἡ δοκεῖ περᾶν δόμους
λύσαι τ' ἀνασσαν ἐξ ἐπισπαστῶν βρόχων ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

τί δ' ; οὐ πάρεισι πρόσπολοι νεανίαι ;
τὸ πολλὰ πράσσειν οὐκ ἐν ἀσφαλεῖ βίου.

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ

ὀρθώσατ' ἐκτείνοντες ἄθλιον νέκυν,
πικρὸν τόδ' οἰκούρημα δεσπότης ἐμοῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὄλωλεν ἡ δύστηνος, ὡς κλύω, γυνή·
ἤδη γὰρ ὡς νεκρὸν νιν ἐκτείνουσι δή.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

790

γυναῖκες, ἴστε τίς ποτ' ἐν δόμοις βοή ;
ἡχὴ βαρεῖα προσπόλων μ' ἀφίκετο.
οὐ γάρ τί μ' ὡς θεωρὸν ἀξιοῖ δόμος
πύλας ἀνοίξας εὐφρόνως προσεννέπειν.
μὼν Πιτθέως τι γῆρας εἵργασται νέον ;
πρόσω μὲν ἤδη βίοτος, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἔτ' ἂν
λυπηρὸς ἡμῖν τούσδ' ἂν ἐκλίποι δόμους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ εἰς γέροντας ἦδε σοι τείνει τύχη,
Θησεῦ· νέοι θανόντες ἀλγυνούσί σε.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οἶμοι· τέκνων μοι μή τι συλᾶται βίος ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

800

ζῶσιν, θανούσης μητρὸς ὡς ἀλγιστά σοι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τί φῆς ; ὄλωλεν ἄλοχος ; ἐκ τίνος τύχης ;

HIPPOLYTUS

[*Cry within.*]

*O haste !—will no one bring the steel two-edged,
Wherewith to loose this cincture of her neck ?* 780

SEMI-CHORUS 1

What shall we do, friends ? Deem ye we should pass
The doors, and from the halter loose the queen ?

SEMI-CHORUS 2

Wherefore ? Are no young handmaids at her side ?
The busy meddler treadeth perilous paths.

[*Cry within.*]

*Uncramp the limbs, streak out the hapless corpse.
Bitter house-warding this is for my lords !*

CHORUS

Dead is the woeful lady, by that cry :
Even now they streak her as a corpse is streaked.
Enter THESEUS.

THESEUS

Women, know ye what means this cry within ? 790
A dolorous shriek of handmaids reached mine ears ;
Nor deigns the house to open doors and greet me
Blithely, as from the oracle come home.
Hath aught untoward happed to Pittheus' eld ?
Well-stricken in years is he, yet dole were ours
If haply fare his feet from these halls forth.

CHORUS

Not to the old pertains this thy mischance,
Theseus : the young have died, for grief to thee.

THESEUS

Woe !—is a child's life by the spoiler reft ?

CHORUS

They live, their mother dead—alas for thee ! 800

THESEUS

What say'st thou ?—dead—my wife ? By what mishap ?

225

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βρόχον κρεμαστὸν ἀγχόνῃς ἀνήψατο.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

λύπη παχυνθεῖς, ἥ ἀπὸ συμφορᾶς τίνος ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τοσοῦτον ἴσμεν· ἄρτι γὰρ καὶ γὰρ δόμοις,
Θησεῦ, πάρειμι σὼν κακῶν πενθήτρια.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

αἰαῖ· τί δῆτα τοῖσδ' ἀνέστεμμαι κᾶρα
πλεκτοῖσι φύλλοις, δυστυχῆς θεωρὸς ὢν ;
χαλᾶτε κλῆθρα, πρόσπολοι, πυλωμάτων,
ἐκλύεθ' ἄρμους, ὥς ἴδω πικρὰν θέαν
810 γυναικός, ἥ με κατθανοῦσ' ἀπώλεσεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ ἰὼ τάλαινα μελέων κακῶν·
ἔπαθες, εἰργάσω
τοσοῦτον ὥστε τούσδε συγχέαι δόμους.
αἰαῖ τόλμας, βιαίως θανοῦσ'
ἀνοσίφ τε συμφορᾶ, σᾶς χερὸς
πάλαισμα μελέας.
τίς ἄρα σάν, τάλαιν', ἀμαυροῖ ζωάν ;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὦ μοι ἐγὼ πόνων· ἔπαθον, ὦ πόλις,
τὰ μάκιστ' ἐμῶν κακῶν. ὦ τύχα,
ὥς μοι βαρεῖα καὶ δόμοις ἐπεστάθης,
820 κηλὶς ἄφραστος ἐξ ἁλαστόρων τινός.
κατακονὰ μὲν οὖν ἀβίωτος βίου·
κακῶν δ' ὦ τάλας πέλαγος εἴσορῶ
τοσοῦτον ὥστε μήποτ' ἐκνεῦσαι πάλιν,
μηδ' ἐκπερᾶσαι κύμα τῆσδε συμφορᾶς.

στρ.

HIPPOLYTUS

CHORUS

The strangling noose about her neck she coiled.

THESEUS

By grief's touch frozen, or of what affliction ?

CHORUS

No more I know, for to thine halls but now,
Theseus, I came, o'er these thine ills to mourn.

THESEUS

Woe ! with these wreathèd leaves why is mine head
Crowned—ill-starred harbinger of oracles ?
Shoot back the bolts, my servants, of the doors :
Loose bars, that I may see this bitter sight,
My wife, who hath destroyed me by her death. 810
*The palace is thrown open, and the corpse of PHAEDRA
disclosed, with her handmaids grouped round it.*

CHORUS

Woe for thy misery ! Woe for thine ills, who hast
suffered and wrought
Such a thing as in ruin shall whelm thine home !
Ah for thy desperate deed, who by violence un-
hallowed hast sought [wrestler hast caught !
Death, who with hand despairing the all-quelling
Who shroudeth thy life, O hapless, in gloom ?

THESEUS

(Str.)
Ah me for my woes !—I have suffered calamity, great,
O my people, beyond all other !—O foot of fate,
How hast thou heavily trampled me and mine,
Unlooked-for blight from some avenging fiend— 820
Nay, but destruction that blasteth my life evermore !
On a sea of disaster I look, on a sea without shore,
So vast, that never can I swim thereout,
Nor ride the surge of this calamity.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

τίνα λόγον τάλας, τίνα τύχαν σέθεν
 βαρύποτμον, γύναι, προσανδῶν τύχῳ ;
 ὄρνις γὰρ ὥς τις ἐκ χερῶν ἄφαντος εἶ,
 830 πῆδημ' ἐς "Αιδου κραιπνὸν ὀρμήσασά μοι.
 αἰαῖ αἰαῖ, μέλεα μέλεα τάδε πάθῃ.
 πρόσωθεν δέ ποθεν ἀνακομίζομαι
 τύχαν δαιμόνων
 ἀμπλακίαισι τῶν πάροιθέν τινος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐ σοὶ τάδ', ὦναξ, ἤλυθεν μόνῳ κακά·
 πολλῶν μετ' ἄλλων δ' ὤλεσας κεδνὸν λέχος.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τὸ κατὰ γὰς θέλω, τὸ κατὰ γὰς κνέφας ἀντ.
 μετοικεῖν σκότῳ θανῶν ὁ τλάμων,
 τῆς σῆς στερηθεὶς φιλτάτης ὀμιλίας·
 ἀπώλεσας γὰρ μᾶλλον ἢ κατέφθισο.
 840 †τίνος κλύω ; πόθεν θανάσιμος τύχα,
 γύναι, σὰν ἔβα τάλαινα καρδίαν ; †
 εἴποι τις ἂν τὸ πραχθέν, ἢ μάτην ὄχλον
 στέγει τύραννον δῶμα προσπόλων ἐμῶν ;
 ὦμοι μοι σέθεν * * * * *
 μέλεος, οἶον εἶδον ἄλγος δόμων,
 οὐ τλητὸν οὐδὲ ῥητόν· ἀλλ' ἀπωλόμην·
 ἔρημος οἶκος, καὶ τέκν' ὀρφανεύεται.
 ἔλιπες ἔλιπες, ὦ φίλα
 γυναικῶν ἀρίστα θ' ὀπόσας ἐφορᾷ
 850 φέγγος ἀελίου τε καὶ
 νυκτὸς ἀστερωπὸν σέλας.

HIPPOLYTUS

What word can I speak unto thee ?—how name, dear
wife, [thy life ?

The doom that on thee hath descended and crushed
Like a bird hast thou fleeted from mine hands,
And with swift leap hast rushed to Hades' halls.

Never sorrow of sorrows was like unto mine.

830

On mine head have I gathered the load

Of the far-off sins of an ancient line ;

And this is the vengeance of God.

CHORUS

Not to thee only, king, this grief hath come ;

With many more a dear wife's loss thou sharest.

THESEUS

(*Ant.*)

In the darkness under the earth—ah me, to have died,
That in blackness of deep gloom under the earth I
might hide,

Who am left of thy most dear companionship !

Oh, thou hast dealt worse death than thou hast suffered !

Of whom shall I hear whence came it, the deadly
stroke

840

Of doom, that the heart of thee, my belovèd, broke ?

Will none speak what befell?—or all for naught

Doth this my palace roof a menial throng?

Woe's me, my belovèd, stricken because of thee !

Ah for the grief of mine house, for the travail I see,

Past utterance, past endurance !—lost am I :

Mine house is desolate, motherless my babes.

O my darling, my wife, thou art gone, thou art gone,

O best upon whom the light

Looketh down of the all-beholding sun,

850

Or the splendour of star-eyed night!

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τάλας, ὦ τάλας· ὅσον κακὸν ἔχει δόμος.
 δάκρυσί μου βλέφαρα
 καταχυθέντα τέγγεται σᾶ τύχα·
 τὸ δ' ἐπὶ τῷδε πῆμα φρίσσω πάλαι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἔα ἔα·
 τί δὴ ποθ' ἦδε δέλτος ἐκ φίλης χειρός
 ἡρτημένη ; θέλει τι σημῆναι νέον ;
 ἀλλ' ἢ λέχους μοι καὶ τέκνων ἐπιστολὰς
 860 ἔγραψεν ἡ δύστηνος ἐξαιτουμένη ;
 θάρσει, τάλαινα· λέκτρα γὰρ τὰ Θησέως
 οὐκ ἔστι δῶμά θ' ἥτις εἰσεῖσιν γυνή.
 καὶ μὴν τύποι γε σφενδόνης χρυσηλάτου
 τῆς οὐκέτ' οὔσης τῆσδε προσσαίνουσί με.
 φέρ', ἐξελίξας περιβολὰς σφραγισμάτων
 ἴδω τί λέξαι δέλτος ἦδε μοι θέλει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· τόδ' αὖ νεοχμὸν ἐκδοχαῖς
 ἐπιφέρει θεὸς κακόν. ἐμοί γ' ἂν¹ οὔν
 ἀβίотος βίου τύχα πρὸς τὸ κρανθὲν εἴη τυχεῖν.
 870 ὀλομένους γάρ, οὐκέτ' ὄντας λέγω,
 φεῦ φεῦ, τῶν ἐμῶν τυράννων δόμους·
 ὦ δαῖμον, εἴ πως ἔστι, μὴ σφῆλῃς δόμους,
 αἰτουμένης δὲ κλύθί μου· πρὸς γάρ τινος
 οἰωνὸν ὥστε μάντις εἰσορῶ κακόν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οἴμοι· τόδ' οἶον ἄλλο πρὸς κακῷ κακόν,
 οὐ τλητὸν οὐδὲ λεκτόν. ὦ τάλας ἐγώ.

¹ Paley's suggestion for MSS. μὲν.

HIPPOLYTUS

CHORUS

Alas for thee, and thine house's burden of ill !
With ruth for thy fate running o'er do mine eyes
the tear-drops pour :
[*Aside*] But for woe which must follow I shudder
and shudder still.

THESEUS

Ha !
What is this tablet, what, to her dear hand
Fastened ? Would'st fain speak some word unsaid ?
Now hath she writ, unhappy one, to pray
Touching my marriage or my children aught ?
Fear not, lost love : the woman is not born 860
Shall lie in Theseus' couch, or tread his halls.
Lo, how the impress of the carven gold
Of her that is no more smiles up at me !
Come, let me uncoil the seal's envelopings,
And see what would this tablet say to me.

CHORUS

Woe, woe ! How God bringeth evil following hard
on the track
Of evil ! I count for living unmeet
The lot of a life such as this, as on deeds that are
wrought I look back : [but in ruin and wrack
For the house of my lords standeth not any more,
I behold it hurled from its ancient seat. 870
Ah God, if this may be, wreck not the house,
But hearken my beseeching, for I trace,
Seer-like, an evil omen from his face.

THESEUS

Ah me !—a new curse added to the old,
Past utterance, past endurance ! Woe is me !

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί χρήμα ; λέξον, εἴ τί μοι λόγον μέτα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

βοᾷ βοᾷ δέλτος ἄλαστα. πᾶ φύγω
βάρος κακῶν ; ἀπὸ γὰρ ὀλόμενος οἴχομαι,
οἶον οἶον εἶδον ἐν γραφαῖς μέλος
φθεγγόμενον τλάμων.

880

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αἰαῖ, κακῶν ἀρχηγὸν ἐκφαίνεις λόγον.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τόδε μὲν οὐκέτι στόματος ἐν πύλαις
καθέξω δυσεκπέρατον, ὀλοὸν
κακόν· ἰὼ πόλις.

Ἴππόλυτος εὐνῆς τῆς ἐμῆς ἔτλη θιγεῖν
βία, τὸ σεμνὸν Ζηνὸς ὄμμ' ἀτιμάσας.
ἀλλ' ὦ πάτερ Πόσειδον, ἃς ἐμοί ποτε
ἄρας ὑπέσχου τρεῖς, μιᾷ κατέργασαι
τούτων ἐμὸν παῖδ', ἡμέραν δὲ μὴ φύγοι
τὴνδ', εἴπερ ἡμῖν ὥπασας σαφεῖς ἁράς.

890

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄναξ, ἀπεύχου ταῦτα πρὸς θεῶν πάλιν·
γνώσει γὰρ αὐθις ἀμπλακῶν. ἐμοὶ πιθοῦ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐκ ἔστι· καὶ πρὸς γ' ἐξελῶ σφε τῆσδε γῆς,
δυοῖν δὲ μοίραιν θατέρᾳ πεπλήξεται·
ἣ γὰρ Ποσειδῶν αὐτὸν εἰς Αἰδοῦ πύλας
θανόντα πέμψει τὰς ἐμὰς ἄρας σέβων,
ἣ τῆσδε χώρας ἐκπεσὼν ἀλώμενος
ξένην ἐπ' αἶαν λυπρὸν ἀντλήσει βίον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὃδ' αὐτὸς παῖς σὸς εἰς καιρὸν πάρα,
Ἴππόλυτος· ὀργῆς δ' ἐξανεῖς κακῆς, ἄναξ
Θησεῦ, τὸ λῶστον σοῖσι βούλευσαι δόμοις.

900

HIPPOLYTUS

CHORUS

What is it? Speak, if I may share the tale.

THESEUS

It shrieketh,—ah, horrors the tablet outshrieketh!

O how can I flee

My burden of woes! I am utterly ruin-spel!

What incantation of curses is this I have read

Graved on the wax—woe's me!

880

CHORUS

Alas! thou utterest speech that heralds ill.

THESEUS

No more within my lips' gates will I pen

The horror that chokes utterance—O my people,

Hippolytus hath dared assail my bed

With violence, flouting Zeus's awful eye!

Father Poseidon, thou didst promise me

Three curses once. Do thou with one of these

Destroy my son: may he not 'scape this day,

If soothfast curses thou hast granted me.

890

CHORUS

Oh, for the Gods' sake, King, recall this prayer!

Thou yet shalt know thine error: yield to me.

THESEUS

Never! Yea, I will drive him from the land;

And, of two dooms, with one shall he be scourged:—

Either Poseidon, reverencing my prayers,

Shall slay and speed him unto Hades' halls,

Or, banished from this land, a vagabond

On strange shores shall he drain life's bitter dregs.

CHORUS

Lo, where thy son's self comes in season meet,

Hippolytus: refrain thy wrath, O king

Theseus, and for thine house the best devise.

900

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

κραυγῆς ἀκούσας σῆς ἀφικόμην, πάτερ,
σπουδῇ· τὸ μέντοι πρᾶγμ' ἐφ' ᾧ τὰ νῦν στένεις
οὐκ οἶδα, βουλοίμην δ' ἂν ἐκ σέθεν κλύειν.
ἔα, τί χρήμα ; σὴν δάμαρθ' ὀρώ, πάτερ,
νεκρόν· μεγίστου θαύματος τόδ' ἄξιον
ἦν ἀρτίως ἔλειπον, ἢ φάος τόδε
οὐπω χρόνον παλαιὸν εἰσεδέρκετο.
τί χρήμα πάσχει ; τῷ τρόπῳ διόλλυται,
910 πάτερ, πυθέσθαι βούλομαι σέθεν πάρα.
σιγᾶς ; σιωπῆς δ' οὐδὲν ἔργον ἐν κακοῖς·
ἢ γάρ ποθοῦσα πάντα καρδία κλύειν
κὰν τοῖς κακοῖσι λίχνος οὐσ' ἀλίσκεται.
οὐ μὴν φίλους γε κάτι μᾶλλον ἢ φίλους
κρύπτειν δίκαιον σάς, πάτερ, δυσπραξίας.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὦ πόλλ' ἁμαρτάνοντες ἄνθρωποι μάτην,
τί δὴ τέχνας μὲν μυρίας διδάσκετε
καὶ πάντα μηχανᾶσθε κάξευρίσκετε,
920 ἐν δ' οὐκ ἐπίστασθ' οὐδ' ἐθηράσασθέ πω,
φρονεῖν διδάσκειν οἷσιν οὐκ ἔνεστι νοῦς ;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

δεινὸν σοφιστὴν εἶπας, ὅστις εὖ φρονεῖν
τοὺς μὴ φρονούντας δυνατός ἐστ' ἀναγκάσαι.
ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ ἐν δέοντι λεπτοουργεῖς, πάτερ,
δέδοικα μή σου γλῶσσ' ὑπερβάλλῃ κακοῖς.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

φεῦ, χρὴν βροτοῖσι τῶν φίλων τεκμήριον
σαφές τι κείσθαι καὶ διάγνωσιν φρενῶν,
ὅστις τ' ἀληθὴς ἐστίν ὅς τε μὴ φίλος·
δισσὰς τε φωνὰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους ἔχειν,
τὴν μὲν δικαίαν, τὴν δ' ὅπως ἐτύγχανεν,

HIPPOLYTUS

Enter HIPPOLYTUS.

HIPPOLYTUS

Father, I heard thy crying, and I came
In haste: yet for what cause thou makest moan
I know not, but of thee I fain would hear.
Ha! what is this? Father, thy wife I see
Dead!—matter this for marvel passing great.
But now I left her, who upon this light
Looked, it is not yet a long season since.
What hath befallen her? How perished she?
Father, I fain would learn it from thy mouth. 910
Silent! In trouble silence naught avails.
The heart that yearns to know all cares of thine
Fain shall be found to prove thy troubles too.
Sure, from thy friends—yea, and thy more than
friends,
Father, it is not right to hide thy griefs.

THESEUS

O men that ofttimes err, and err in vain,
Why are ye teaching ever arts untold,
And search out manifold inventions still,
But one thing know not, no, have never sought it,
To teach them wit, in whom no wisdom dwells? 920

HIPPOLYTUS

A cunning sage were this, endued with power
To force them to be wise who are witless all!
But—so ill-timed thy speculations are—
Father, I fear thy tongue for grief runs wild.

THESEUS

Out! There should dwell in men some certain test
Of friendship, a discernor of the heart,
To show who is true friend and who is false.
Yea, all men should have had two several voices,
One honest, one—as chance or interest swayed;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

930

ὥς ἡ φρονούσα τᾶδικ' ἐξηλέγετο
πρὸς τῆς δικαίας, κούκ ἂν ἡπατώμεθα.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἡ τις εἰς σὸν οὖς με διαβαλὼν ἔχει
φίλων, νοσοῦμεν δ' οὐδὲν ὄντες αἴτιοι ;
ἐκ τοι πέπληγμαι· σοὶ γὰρ ἐκπλήσσουσί με
λόγοι παραλλάσσοντες ἔξεδροι φρενῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

940

φεῦ τῆς βροτείας—ποῖ προβήσεται ;—φρενός·
τί τέρμα τόλμης καὶ θράσους γενήσεται ;
εἰ γὰρ κατ' ἀνδρὸς βίοτον ἐξογκώσεται,
ὁ δ' ὕστερος τοῦ πρόσθεν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν
πανούργος ἔσται, θεοῖσι προσβαλεῖν χθονὶ
ἄλλην δεήσει γαίαν, ἣ χωρήσεται
τοὺς μὴ δικαίους καὶ κακοὺς πεφυκότας.
σκέφασθε δ' εἰς τόνδ', ὅστις ἐξ ἐμοῦ γεγῶς
ἥσχυνε τὰ μὰ λέκτρα κάξελέγχεται
πρὸς τῆς θανούσης ἐμφανῶς κάκιστος ὢν.
δεῖξον δ', ἐπειδὴ γ' εἰς μίασμ' ἐλήλυθας,
τὸ σὸν πρόσωπον δεῦρ' ἐναντίον πατρί.
σὺ δὴ θεοῖσιν ὥς περισσὸς ὢν ἀνὴρ
ξύνει ; σὺ σῶφρων καὶ κακῶν ἀκήρατος ;
οὐκ ἂν πιθοίμην τοῖσι σοῖς κόμποις ἐγὼ
θεοῖσι προσθεὶς ἀμαθίαν φρονεῖν κακῶς.
ἤδη νυν αὔχει καὶ δι' ἀψυχον βορᾶς
σίτοις καπήλευ', Ὀρφέα τ' ἄνακτ' ἔχων
βάκχευε πολλῶν γραμμάτων τιμῶν καπνούς·
ἐπεὶ γ' ἐλήφθης. τοὺς δὲ τοιούτους ἐγὼ
φεύγειν προφωνῶ πᾶσι· θηρεύουσι γὰρ
σεμνοῖς λόγοισιν, αἰσχρὰ μηχανώμενοι.

950

HIPPOLYTUS

That so the traitor voice might be convict 930
Before the honest, nor we be deceived.

HIPPOLYTUS

How?—to thine ear hath some friend slandered me,
That I the innocent am in evil case?
Astonied am I, for thy words amaze me,
Thus wandering wide astray from reason's throne.

THESEUS

Out on man's heart!—to what depths will it sink?
Where shall assurance end and hardihood?
For if it swell with every generation,
And the new age reach heights of villainy
Above the old, the Gods must needs create 940
A new earth unto this, that room be found
For the unrighteous and unjust in grain.
Look on this man, who, though he be my son,
Hath shamed my couch, and shall be manifest proved
Most vile, by testimony of the dead.

HIPPOLYTUS *covers his face in horror.*

Nay, show thy face—since thou hast come to this,
This foulness,—look thy father in the face!
Dost thou with Gods—O thou no common man!—
Consort? Art thou the chaste, the stainless one?
I will not trust thy boasts, for so should I 950
Impute to Gods unwisdom's ignorance.
Now vaunt, ay now!—set out thy paltry wares
Of lifeless food:¹ take Orpheus for thy king:
Rave, worship vapourings of many a scroll:
For ah, thou'rt caught! I warn all men to shun
Such hypocrites as this; for they hunt souls
With canting words, the while they plot foul sin.

¹ Abstinence from animal food was a feature of the ascetic doctrines attributed to Orpheus, as of those of Pythagoras.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

- 960 τέθνηκεν ἦδε· τοῦτό σ' ἐκώσσειν δοκεῖς ;
 ἐν τῷδ' ἀλίσκει πλείστον, ὦ κάκιστε σύ·
 ποῖοι γὰρ ὄρκοι κρείσσονες, τίνες λόγοι
 τῆσδ' ἂν γένοιτ' ἄν, ὥστε σ' αἰτίαν φυγεῖν ;
 μσεῖν σε φήσεις τήνδε καὶ τὸ δὴ νόθον
 τοῖς γνησίοισι πολέμιον πεφυκέναι·
 κακὴν ἄρ' αὐτὴν ἔμπορον βίου λέγεις,
 εἰ δυσμενεία σῇ τὰ φίλτατ' ὤλεσεν.
 ἀλλ' ὥς τὸ μῶρον ἀνδράσιν μὲν οὐκ ἔνι,
 γυναιξὶ δ' ἐμπέφυκεν ; οἶδ' ἐγὼ νέους
 οὐδὲν γυναικῶν ὄντας ἀσφαλεστέρους,
 970 ὅταν ταραξῇ Κύπρις ἡβῶσαν φρένα·
 τὸ δ' ἄρσεν αὐτοὺς ὠφελεῖ προσκείμενον.
 νῦν οὖν τί ταῦτα σοῖς ἀμιλλῶμαι λόγοις
 νεκροῦ παρόντος μάρτυρος σαφεστάτου ;
 ἔξερρε γαίης τῆσδ' ὅσον τάχος φυγὰς,
 καὶ μήτ' Ἀθήνας τὰς θεοδμήτους μόλης,
 μήτ' εἰς ὄρους γῆς ἧς ἐμὸν κρατεῖ δόρυ.
 εἰ γὰρ παθὼν γε σοῦ τὰδ' ἥσσηθήσομαι,
 οὐ μαρτυρήσει μ' Ἰσθμὸς Σίνις ποτὲ
 κτανεῖν ἑαυτόν, ἀλλὰ κομπάζειν μάτην,
 οὐδ' αἱ θαλάσση σύννομοι Σκειρωνίδες
 980 φήσουσι πέτραι τοῖς κακοῖς μ' εἶναι βαρύν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως εἵποίμ' ἂν εὐτυχεῖν τινα
 θνητῶν· τὰ γὰρ δὴ πρῶτ' ἀνέστραπται πάλιν.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

πάτερ, μένος μὲν ξύστασις τε σῶν φρενῶν
 δεινὴ· τὸ μέντοι πρᾶγμ' ἔχον καλοὺς λόγους,
 εἴ τις διαπτύξειεν, οὐ καλὸν τόδε.
 ἐγὼ δ' ἄκομψος εἰς ὄχλον δοῦναι λόγον,

HIPPOLYTUS

Dead is she : thinkest thou this saveth thee ?
Hereby thou art most convicted, basest thou !
What oaths, what protestations shall bear down 960

Thrusts tablet into HIPPOLYTUS' hand.

This, for thine absolution of the charge ?
Now, what is thy defence ?—" She hated me :
Bastard and true-born still are natural foes ?"
Fools' traffic this in life—to fling away
For hate of *thee* the dearest thing she owed !
Or—say'st thou ?—" Frailty is not in men,
But in the blood of women." Youths, I have proved,
Are no whit more than women continent,
When Cypris stirs a heart in flush of youth :
Yet all the strength of manhood helpeth them. 970
But wherefore thus contend against thy pleas,
When there the corpse lies, witness faithful and
true ?

Hence from this land, an exile, with all speed.
Never come thou to god-built Athens more,
Nor any marches where my spear hath sway :
For if 'neath thy mishandling I sit still,
Never shall Isthmian Sinis testify
That I slew him, but name it idle vaunt ;
Nor those Scironian Rocks that skirt the sea
Shall call me terrible to evil-doers. 980

CHORUS

I dare not name of mortals any man
Happy, for lo, the first is made the last.

HIPPOLYTUS

Father, thy rage and strong-strained fury of soul
Are fearful : yet, fair-seeming though the charge,
If one unfold it, all unfair it is.
I have no skill to speak before a throng :

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

εἰς ἡλικας δὲ κωλύγους σοφώτερος.
 ἔχει δὲ μοῖραν καὶ τόδ'· οἱ γὰρ ἐν σοφοῖς
 φαῦλοι παρ' ὅχλῳ μουσικώτεροι λέγειν.
 990 ὅμως δ' ἀνάγκη, συμφορᾶς ἀφιγμένης,
 γλῶσσάν μ' ἀφεῖναι. πρῶτα δ' ἄρξομαι λέγειν
 ὅθεν μ' ὑπήλθες πρῶτον ὡς διαφθερῶν
 οὐκ ἀντιλέξοντ'. εἰσορᾶς φάος τόδε
 καὶ γαῖαν· ἐν τοῖσδ' οὐκ ἔνεστ' ἀνὴρ ἐμοῦ,
 οὐδ' ἦν σὺ μὴ φῆς, σωφρονέστερος γεγώς.
 ἐπίσταμαι γὰρ πρῶτα μὲν θεοὺς σέβειν,
 φίλοις τε χρῆσθαι μὴ ἄδικεῖν πειρωμένοις,
 ἀλλ' οἷσιν αἰδῶς μὴτ' ἐπαγγέλλειν κακὰ
 μὴτ' ἀνθυπουργεῖν αἰσχροῖς τοῖσι χρωμένοις·
 1000 οὐκ ἐγγελαστής τῶν ὀμιλούντων, πάτερ,
 ἀλλ' αὐτὸς οὐ παροῦσι κάγγυς ὦν φίλος.
 ἐνὸς δ' ἄθικτος, ᾧ με νῦν ἐλεῖν δοκεῖς·
 λέχους γὰρ εἰς τόδ' ἡμέρας ἀγνὸν δέμας.
 οὐκ οἶδα πρᾶξιν τήνδε πλὴν λόγῳ κλύων
 γραφῇ τε λεύσσω· οὐδὲ ταῦτα γὰρ σκοπεῖν
 πρόθυμός εἰμι, παρθένον ψυχὴν ἔχων.
 καὶ δὴ τὸ σῶφρον τοῦμόν οὐ πείθει σ' ἴσως·
 δεῖ δὴ σε δεῖξαι τῷ τρόπῳ διεφθάρην.
 πότερα τὸ τῆσδε σώμ' ἐκαλλιστευετο
 1010 πασῶν γυναικῶν ; ἢ σὸν οἰκῆσειν δόμον
 ἔγκληρον εὐνήν προσλαβὼν ἐπήλπισα ;
 μάταιος ἄρ' ἦ, κοῦδαμοῦ μὲν οὔν φρενῶν.
 ἀλλ' ὡς τυραννεῖν ἡδὺ τοῖσι σώφροσιν ;
 ἡκιστά γ', εἰ μὴ τὰς φρένας διέφθορε
 θνητῶν ὅσοισιν ἀνδάνει μοναρχία.
 ἐγὼ δ' ἀγῶνας μὲν κρατεῖν Ἑλληνικοὺς
 πρῶτος θέλοιμ' ἄν, ἐν πόλει δὲ δεύτερος
 σὺν τοῖς ἀρίστοις εὐτυχεῖν ἀεὶ φίλοις.

HIPPOLYTUS

My tongue is loosed with equals, and those few.
And reason : they that are among the wise
Of none account, to mobs are eloquent.
Yet needs I must, now this mischance hath lighted, 990
Unrein my tongue. And first will I begin
Where thou didst first assail, as thou wouldst crush me,
And I find no reply. See'st thou yon sun
And earth?—within their compass is no man—
Though thou deny it—chaster-souled than I.
For I have learnt, first, to revere the Gods,
Then, to have friends which seek to do no wrong,
Friends who think shame to proffer aught of base,
Yea, or to render others shameful service.
No mocker am I, father, at my friends, 1000
But to the absent even as to the present :
In one thing flawless,—where thou think'st me
trapped,—
For to this day my body is clean of lust.
I know this commerce not, save by the ear
And sight of pictures,—little will have I
To look thereon, who keep a virgin soul.
Yet, grant my virtue wins not thy belief,
Sure 'tis for thee to show whereby I fell.
Wilt say this woman's form in grace outshone
All women?—that I hoped thy state to inherit 1010
By winning for mine own thine heiress-queen?
Vain fool were I—nay rather, wholly mad!
“But Power can tempt,” might one say, “even the
chaste.”
Nay verily!—save the lust of sovereignty
Poison the wit of all who covet it.
Fain would I foremost victor be in games
Hellenic, and be second in the realm,
And with pure-hearted friends be happy still.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

- 1020 πρᾶσσειν γὰρ εὖ πάρεστι, κίνδυνός τ' ἀπὼν
κρείσσω δίδωσι τῆς τυραννίδος χάριν.
ἐν οὐ λέλεκται τῶν ἐμῶν, τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἔχεις·
εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἦν μοι μάρτυς οἶός εἰμ' ἐγώ,
καὶ τῇσδ' ὁρώσης φέγγος ἠγωνιζόμεν,
ἔργοις ἂν εἶδες τοὺς κακοὺς διεξιῶν.
νῦν δ' ὄρκιόν σοι Ζῆνα καὶ πέδον χθονὸς
ὄμνυμι τῶν σῶν μήποθ' ἄψασθαι γάμων
μηδ' ἂν θελῆσαι μηδ' ἂν ἔννοιαν λαβεῖν.
ἦ τάρ' ὀλοίμην ἀκλεὴς ἀνώνυμος,
ἄπολις ἄοικος, φυγὰς ἀλητεύων χθόνα,
1030 καὶ μήτε πόντος μήτε γῆ δέξαιτό μου
σάρκας θανόντος, εἰ κακὸς πέφυκ' ἀνὴρ.
εἰ δ' ἦδε δειμαίνουσ' ἀπώλεσεν βίον
οὐκ οἶδ'. ἐμοὶ γὰρ οὐ θέμις πέρα λέγειν.
ἔσωφρόνησε δ' οὐκ ἔχουσα σωφρονεῖν,
ἡμεῖς δ', ἔχοντες οὐ καλῶς, ἐχρώμεθα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἄρκοῦσαν εἰπας αἰτίας ἀποστροφὴν,
ὄρκους παρασχών, πίστιν οὐ σμικράν, θεῶν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

- ἄρ' οὐκ ἐπῳδὸς καὶ γόης πέφυχ' ὅδε,
ὃς τὴν ἐμὴν πέποιθεν εὐοργησίᾳ
1040 ψυχὴν κρατήσκειν τὸν τεκόντ' ἀτιμάσας ;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

καὶ σοῦ γε κάρτα ταῦτα θαυμάζω, πάτερ·
εἰ γὰρ σὺ μὲν παῖς ἦσθ', ἐγὼ δὲ σὸς πατήρ,
ἔκτεινά τοί σ' ἂν κοῦ φυγαῖς ἐξημίουν,
εἵπερ γυναικὸς ἡξίους ἐμῆς θυγεῖν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὥς ἄξιον τόδ' εἰπας· οὐχ οὕτω θανεῖ,
ὥσπερ σὺ σαυτῷ τόνδε προὔθηκας νόμον·

HIPPOLYTUS

For there is true well-being, from peril far,
Which giveth sweeter joys than sovereignty. 1020
So hast thou all my counterpleas, save one :—
Could I that witness call who knows mine heart,
And, pleading, face thy dead wife's living face,
By deeds shouldst thou search out and know the
wicked :

But now—by Zeus Oath-warden, by Earth's plain,
Swear I, I ne'er attempted couch of thine,
No, nor had wished it, nor had dreamed thereof.
God grant I perish nameless, fameless all,
Cityless, homeless, exile, vagabond
On earth,—may sea nor land receive my corpse 1030
When I am dead, if I be this vile thing !
Now if through fear she flung away her life
I know not. More I cannot sinless say.
Her honour by dishonour did she guard :
I, in a sore strait, cleave to honour still.

CHORUS

Thou hast said enough to turn this charge from thee,
Tendering the oath of Gods, the awful pledge.

THESEUS

Juggler with words and trickster is he not,
Who thinks by his unruffled calm to outface
My mood, when his own father he hath shamed ? 1040

HIPPOLYTUS

Nay, but I marvel, father, at this in thee ;—
For, if my son thou wert, and I thy sire,
I had slain thee : exile should not be thy mulct,
If on my wife thou hadst dared to lay a hand.

THESEUS

Good sooth, well said : yet not so shalt thou die—
Not by the doom thou speakest for thyself !

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

1050 ταχὺς γὰρ Ἀιδης ῥᾶστος ἀνδρὶ δυστυχεῖ
ἀλλ' ἐκ πατρώας φυγὰς ἀλητεύων χθονός
ξένην ἐπ' αἶαν λυπρὸν ἀντλήσεις βίον·
μισθὸς γὰρ οὗτός ἐστιν ἀνδρὶ δυσσεβεῖ.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οἴμοι, τί δράσεις ; οὐδὲ μηνυτὴν χρόνον
δέξει καθ' ἡμῶν, ἀλλὰ μ' ἐξελάς χθονός ;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

πέραν γε πόντου τερμόνων τ' Ἀτλαντικῶν,
εἴ πως δυναίμην, ὥς σὸν ἐχθαίρω κάρα.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐδ' ὄρκον οὐδὲ πίστιν οὐδὲ μάντεων
φήμας ἐλέγξας ἄκριτον ἐβαλεῖς με γῆς ;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἡ δέλτος ἦδε κλῆρον οὐ δεδεγμένη
κατηγορεῖ σου πιστά· τοὺς δ' ὑπὲρ κάρα
φοιτῶντας ὄρνεις πόλλ' ἐγὼ χαίρειν λέγω.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

1060 ὦ θεοί, τί δῆτα τοῦμὸν οὐ λύω στόμα,
ὅστις γ' ὑφ' ὑμῶν, οὓς σέβω, διόλλυμαι ;
οὐ δῆτα· πάντως οὐ πίθοιμ' ἂν οὓς με δεῖ,
μάτην δ' ἂν ὄρκους συγχέαιμ' οὓς ὤμοσα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οἴμοι· τὸ σεμνὸν ὥς μ' ἀποκτείνει τὸ σόν.
οὐκ εἰ πατρώας ἐκτὸς ὥς τάχιστα γῆς ;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ποῖ δῆθ' ὁ τλήμων τρέψομαι ; τίνος ξένων
δόμους ἔσειμι τῇδ' ἐπ' αἰτία φυγῶν ;

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὅστις γυναικῶν λυμεῶνας ἦδεται
ξένους κομίζων καὶ συνοικύρους κακῶν.

HIPPOLYTUS

Ay, easiest for the wretched is swift death:
But from the home-land exiled, wandering
To strange soil, shalt thou drain life's bitter dregs ;
For this is meet wage for the impious man. 1050

HIPPOLYTUS

Woe's me !—what wilt thou do ? Wilt not receive
Time's witness in my cause, but banish now ?

THESEUS

Beyond the sea, beyond the Atlantic bourn,
If this I could ; so much I hate thy face.

HIPPOLYTUS

Nor oath, nor pledge, nor prophet's utterance
Wilt test, but cast me forth the land untried ?

THESEUS

This tablet, though it bear no prophet's sign,
Accuseth thee, nor lieth : but the birds
That roam o'erhead—I wave them long farewell.

HIPPOLYTUS (*aside*)

O Gods, why can I not unlock my lips, 1060
Who am destroyed by you whom I revere ?
No !—whom I need persuade, I should not so,
And all for naught should break the oaths I swore.

THESEUS

Faugh !—how it chokes me, this thy saintly mien !
Out from thy fatherland ! Straightway begone !

HIPPOLYTUS

Unhappy ! whither shall I flee ?—what home
Of what friend enter, banished on such charge ?

THESEUS

Of whoso joys in welcoming for guests
Defilers of men's wives, which dwell with sin.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

1070

αἰαῖ· πρὸς ἡπαρ δακρύων τ' ἐγγὺς τόδε,
εἰ δὴ κακὸς γε φαίνομαι δοκῶ τέ σοι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

τότε στενάζειν καὶ προγιγνώσκειν σ' ἐχρῆν,
ὅτ' εἰς πατρώαν ἄλοχον ὑβρίζειν ἔτλης.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὦ δώματ', εἴθε φθέγμα γηρύσαισθέ μοι
καὶ μαρτυρήσαιτ' εἰ κακὸς πέφυκ' ἀνὴρ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

εἰς τοὺς ἀφώνους μάρτυρας φεύγεις σοφῶς·
τὸ δ' ἔργον οὐ λέγον σε μνηνεὶ κακόν.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

φεῦ·
εἴθ' ἦν ἐμαυτὸν προσβλέπειν ἐναντίον
στάνθ', ὥς ἐδάκρυσ' οἷα πάσχομεν κακά.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1080

πολλῷ γε μᾶλλον σαντὸν ἥσκησας σέβειν
ἢ τοὺς τεκόντας ὅσια δρᾶν, δίκαιος ὢν.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὦ δυστάλαινα μήτηρ, ὦ πικραὶ γοναί·
μηδεὶς ποτ' εἴη τῶν ἐμῶν φίλων νόθος.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οὐχ ἔλξετ' αὐτόν, δμῶες; οὐκ ἀκούετε
πάλαί ξενοῦσθαι τόνδε προϋννέποντά με;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

κλαίων τις αὐτῶν ἄρ' ἐμοῦ γε θίξεται·
σὺ δ' αὐτός, εἴ σοι θυμός, ἐξώθει χθονός.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

δράσω τάδ', εἰ μὴ τοῖς ἐμοῖς πείσει λόγοις·
οὐ γάρ τις οἶκτος σῆς μ' ὑπέρχεται φυγῆς.

HIPPOLYTUS

HIPPOLYTUS

Alas ! this stabs mine heart well-nigh to weeping,
If I be published villain, thou believe it ! 1070

THESEUS

Then shouldest thou have moaned and taken thought,
When thou dar'dst. outrage thine own father's wife !

HIPPOLYTUS

O halls, could ye but find a voice for me,
And witness if I be a wicked man !

THESEUS

Wisely thou fleest to speechless witnesses !
This deed, though it speak not, declares thee vile.

HIPPOLYTUS

Ah, to stand face to face and see myself,
That for the wrongs I suffer I might weep !

THESEUS

Yea, 'tis thy wont to gaze on thy perfections 1080
More than to render parents righteous honour.

HIPPOLYTUS

Ah, hapless mother !—ah, my bitter birth !
Base-born be never any that I love !

THESEUS

Will ye not hale him hence, thralls ?—heard ye not
Long since his banishment pronounced of me ?

HIPPOLYTUS

Who layeth hand on me of them shall rue !
Thou thrust me from the land, if such thy mood.

THESEUS

That will I, an thou wilt not heed mine hest.
No pity for thine exile visits me. [Exit THESEUS.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

- 1090 ἄραρεν, ὡς ἔοικεν· ὦ τάλας ἐγώ·
 ὡς οἶδα μὲν ταύτ', οἶδα δ' οὐχ ὅπως φράσω.
 ὦ φιλτάτῃ μοι δαιμόνων Λητοῦς κόρη
 σύνθακε συγκύναγε, φευξόμεσθα δὴ
 κλεινὰς Ἀθήνας. ἀλλὰ χαίρετ', ὦ πόλις
 καὶ γαῖ' Ἐρεχθέως· ὦ πέδον Τροιζήνιον,
 ὡς ἐγκαθηβὰν πόλλ' ἔχεις εὐδαίμονα,
 χαῖρ'· ὕστατον γάρ σ' εἰσορῶν προσφθέγγομαι.
 ἴτ', ὦ νέοι μοι τῆσδε γῆς ὁμήλικες,
 προσείπαθ' ἡμᾶς καὶ προπέμψατε χθονός·
 1100 ὡς οὔποτ' ἄλλον ἄνδρα σωφρονέστερον
 ὄψεσθε, κεῖ μὴ ταύτ' ἐμῷ δοκεῖ πατρί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

- στρ. α'
 ἦ μέγα μοι τὰ θεῶν μελεδήμαθ', ὅταν φρένας
 ἔλθῃ,
 λύπας παραιρεῖ·
 ξύνεσιν δέ τιν' ἐλπίδι κεύθων
 λείπομαι ἔν τε τύχαις θνατῶν καὶ ἐν ἔργμασι
 λεύσσω·
 ἄλλα γὰρ ἄλλοθεν ἀμείβεται,
 μετὰ δ' ἴσταται ἀνδράσιν αἰὼν
 1110 πολυπλάνητος αἰεῖ.

ἀντ. α'
 εἶθε μοι εὐξαμένα θεόθεν τάδε μοῖρα παράσχοι,
 τύχαν μετ' ὀλβου
 καὶ ἀκήρατον ἄλγεσι θυμόν·
 δόξα δὲ μήτ' ἀτρεκῆς μήτ' αὖ παράσημος ἐνείῃ·
 ῥάδια δ' ἦθεα τὸν αὔριον
 μεταβαλλομένα χρόνον αἰεὶ
 βίον συνευτυχοίην.

HIPPOLYTUS

HIPPOLYTUS

So then my fate is sealed. Ah, woe is me ! 1090
 I know the truth, yet know not how to tell it.
 Dearest of Gods to me, O Leto's Child,
 Companion, fellow-huntress, I shall flee
 Athens the glorious. Farewell, City and Land
 Of old Erechtheus ! O Troezenian plain,
 How many pleasant paths of youth hast thou !
 Farewell : I see thee, hail thee, the last time.
 Come, O ye youths, mine age-mates in this land,
 Speak parting word : escort me from this soil :
 For never shall ye see a chaster man, 1100
 Albeit this my sire believeth not. [Exit.]

CHORUS

(Str. 1)
 When faith overfloweth my mind, God's providence
 all-embracing [but to know !"
 Banisheth griefs : but when doubt whispereth " Ah
 No clue through the tangle I find of fate and of life
 for my tracing :
 There is ever a change and many a change,
 And the mutable fortune of men evermore sways
 to and fro
 Over limitless range. 1110

(Ant. 1)
 Ah, would the Gods hear prayer !—would they grant
 to me these supplications— [of pain,
 A lot with prosperity sweet, and a soul unshadowed
 And a faith neither fixed foursquare on the flint,
 nor on sandy foundations !
 Quick-shifting my sail to the coming breeze
 Of the morrow, so may I fleet, ever voyaging life's
 wide main
 Over stormless seas.

στρ. β'

1120 οὐκέτι γὰρ καθαρὰν φρέν' ἔχω τὰ παρ' ἐλπίδα
λεύσσω,

ἐπεὶ τὸν Ἑλλανίας
φανερώτατον ἀστέρ' Ἀθάνας
εἶδομεν εἶδομεν ἐκ πατρὸς ὀργᾶς
ἄλλαν ἐπ' αἶαν ἰέμενον.
ὦ ψάμαθοι πολιήτιδος ἀκτᾶς
δρυμός τ' ὄρειος, ὅθι κυνῶν
ὠκυπόδων μέτα θήρας ἔναιρην

1130 Δίκτυνναν ἀμφὶ σεμνάν.

ἀντ. β'

οὐκέτι συζυγίαν πώλων Ἑνετᾶν ἐπιβάσει
τὸν ἀμφὶ Λίμνας τρόχον
κατέχων ποδὶ γυμνάδος ἵππου.
μοῦσα δ' ἄνπνος ὑπ' ἄντυγι χορδᾶν
λήξει πατρῶον ἀνὰ δόμον·
ἀστέφανοι δὲ κόρας ἀνάπαυλαι
Λατοῦς βαθείαν ἀνὰ χλόαν·

1140 νυμφιδίων δ' ἀπόλωλε φυγᾷ σῆ
λέκτρων ἄμιλλα κούραις.

ἐγὼ δὲ σῆ δυστυχία δάκρυσι διοίσω
πότμον ἄποτμον· ὦ τάλαινα
μᾶτερ, ἔτεκες ἀνόνατα· φεῦ,
μανίω θεοῖσιν·
ἰὼ ἰὼ συζύγαι Χάριτες,

ἐπφδ.

HIPPOLYTUS

(*Str.* 2)

My mind is a fountain troubled; I see things all
undreamed : 1120

For the Star of Athens, that beamed
The brightest withal in Hellas-land,
We have seen him driven to an alien strand,
By the wrath of a father have seen him
banned.

Ah, cityward sands, ye shall wait him in vain,
And ye mountain woods, where streamed
'Twixt the oaks the pack on the wild boar's
track

In dread Dictynna's hunter-train, 1130
Till the quarry was slain.

(*Ant.* 2)

Nevermore shall he harness the Henetan horses and
leap on his car,

O'er the race-course of Limne afar
To speed the courser's feet of fire :
And the songs, that once 'neath the strings
of the lyre
Slept never, shall cease in the halls of his sire.
Ungarlanded Artemis' bowers shall be
In the greenwood depths that are.
By thine exile have perished the sweet hopes
cherished 1140

Of our maids, and their gentle rivalry
In love for thee.

(*Epode*)

For thy woeful fate shall I pass amid tears fast-flowing
A fortuneless fortune. O mother evil-starred,
This day thy birth-joy effaces !
I am wroth with the Gods :—O Graces
Aye linkèd in loving embraces,

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

1150 τί τὸν τάλαν' ἐκ πατρίας γᾶς
τὸν οὐδὲν ἄτας αἵτιον
πέμπετε τῶνδ' ἀπ' οἴκων ;

καὶ μὴν ὀπαδὸν Ἴππολύτου τόνδ' εἰσορῶ
σπουδῇ σκυθρωπὸν πρὸς δόμους ὀρμώμενον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ποῖ γῆς ἄνακτα τῆσδε Θησέα μολῶν
εὖροιμ' ἄν, ὦ γυναῖκες ; εἶπερ ἴστ', ἐμοὶ
σημήνατ'· ἄρα τῶνδε δωμάτων ἔσω ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὃδ' αὐτὸς ἔξω δωμάτων πορεύεται.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Θησεῦ, μερίμνης ἄξιον φέρω λόγον
σοὶ καὶ πολίταις οἳ τ' Ἀθηναίων πόλιν
ναίουσι καὶ γῆς τέρμονας Τροιζηνίας.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1160 τί δ' ἔστι ; μῶν τις συμφορὰ νεωτέρα
δισσὰς κατείληφ' ἀστυγείτονας πόλεις ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

Ἴππόλυτος οὐκέτ' ἔστιν, ὥς εἰπεῖν ἔπος·
δέδορκε μέντοι φῶς ἐπὶ σμικρᾷς ῥοπῆς.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

πρὸς τοῦ ; δι' ἔχθρας μῶν τις ἦν ἀφυγμένος,
οὔτου κατήσχυν' ἄλοχον ὥς πατρὸς βίᾳ ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

οἰκείος αὐτὸν ὤλεσ' ἀρμάτων ὄχος
ἀραί τε τοῦ σοῦ στόματος, ἅς σὺ σῶ πατρὶ
πόντου κρέοντι παιδὸς ἠράσω πέρι.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1170 ὦ θεοὶ Πόσειδόν θ', ὥς ἄρ' ἦσθ' ἐμὸς πατὴρ
ὀρθῶς, ἀκούσας τῶν ἐμῶν κατευγμάτων.

HIPPOLYTUS

Why do ye suffer that he from his land should be going,
From his home, who hath nowise earned a doom so
bitter-hard? 1150

But lo, I see Hippolytus' henchman nigh
Hasting unto the halls with clouded brows.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

Where should I go and find this country's king,
Theseus, ye women? If ye know, declare
Straightway to me. Within these halls is he?

CHORUS

Lo yonder where he cometh forth the halls.

Enter THESEUS.

MESSENGER

Theseus, I bring a sorrow-kindling tale
To thee and all the citizens which dwell
In Athens and the bounds of Troezen-land.

THESEUS

What now? Hath some disaster unforeseen 1160
Fallen on these two neighbour-cited states?

MESSENGER

Hippolytus is no more!—so may one say,
Though yet a little space he seeth light.

THESEUS

Of whom slain? Hath one met him in his wrath,
Whose wife he had outraged, even as his sire's?

MESSENGER

His proper chariot-team hath dealt him death,
And thy mouth's curses, which thou didst call down
From the Sea's Lord, thy father, on thy son.

THESEUS

O Gods! Poseidon! how thou wast indeed 1170
My father, who hast heard my malison!

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

πῶς καὶ διώλετ' ; εἶπέ· τῷ τρόπῳ Δίκης
ἔπαισεν αὐτὸν ῥόπτρον αἰσχύναντ' ἐμέ ;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

- ἡμεῖς μὲν ἀκτῆς κυμοδέγμονος πέλας
ψήκτραισιν ἵππων ἐκτενίζομεν τρίχας
κλαίοντες· ἦλθε γάρ τις ἄγγελος λέγων
ὥς οὐκέτ' ἐν γῇ τῇδ' ἀναστρέψοι πόδα
Ἴππολύτος, ἐκ σοῦ τλήμονας φυγὰς ἔχων.
ὁ δ' ἦλθε ταῦτ' οὐκ ἔχων μέλος
1180 ἡμῖν ἐπ' ἀκταῖς· μυρία δ' ὀπισθόπους
φίλων ἅμ' ἔστειχ' ἡλίκων ὁμήγουρις.
χρόνῳ δὲ δήποτ' εἶπ' ἀπαλλαχθεὶς γόων·
τί ταῦτ' ἄλῳ ; πειστέον πατρὸς λόγοις.
ἐντύναθ' ἵππους ἄρμασι ζυγηφόρους,
δμῶες· πόλις γὰρ οὐκέτ' ἔστιν ἡδε μοι.
τοῦνθένδε μέντοι πᾶς ἀνὴρ ἠπείγετο,
καὶ θᾶσσον ἢ λέγοι τις ἐξηρτυμένας
πώλους παρ' αὐτὸν δεσπότην ἐστήσαμεν.
μάρπτει δὲ χερσὶν ἡνίας ἀπ' ἀντυγος,
1190 αὐταῖσιν ἀρβύλαισιν ἀρμόσας πόδας.
καὶ πρῶτα μὲν θεοῖς εἶπ' ἀναπτύξας χέρας·
Ζεῦ, μηκέτ' εἶην, εἰ κακὸς πέφυκ' ἀνὴρ·
αἰσθοῖτο δ' ἡμᾶς ὡς ἀτιμάζει πατὴρ
ἦτοι θανόντας ἢ φάος δεδορκότας.
κὰν τῷδ' ἐπῆγε κέντρον εἰς χεῖρας λαβὼν
πώλοις ὁμαρτῇ· πρόσπολοι δ' ἐφ' ἄρματος
πέλας χαλινῶν εἰπόμεσθα δεσπότη
τὴν εὐθύς Ἀργούς καπιδαυρίας ὁδόν.
1200 ἐπεὶ δ' ἔρημον χῶρον εἰσεβάλλομεν,
ἀκτὴ τις ἔστι τοῦπέκεινα τῆσδε γῆς
πρὸς πόντον ἤδη κειμένη Σαρωνικόν.
ἔνθεν τις ἡχὼ χθόνιος ὡς βροντὴ Διὸς

HIPPOLYTUS

How perished he? In what way did the gin
Of justice snap on him who wrought me shame?

MESSENGER

We, hard beside the beach that greets the surf,
With combs were smoothing out his horses' manes
Weeping: for word had come to us to say
That no more in this land Hippolytus
Might walk, of thee to wretched exile doomed.
Then came he, bringing the same tale of tears
To us upon the strand: a countless throng
Of friends his age-mates following with him came. 1180
But, ceasing at the last from moan, he cried:
"Why rave I thus? I must obey my sire.
Harness the horses to the chariot-yoke,
My thralls: this city is no more for me."

Then, then did every man bestir himself.
Swifter than one could say it were the steeds
Harnessed, and by our lord's side set we them.
Then the reins caught he from the chariot-rail,
And in the car's foot-rests set firm his feet,
But to the Gods first stretched his hands and cried: 1190
"Zeus, may I die if I a villain am!
May my sire know that he is wronging me,
When I am dead, if not while I see light!"
Then in his hand he took the scourge and smote
At once the steeds. We henchmen by the car
Fast by the reins attended on our lord
Towards Argos straight and Epidauria.

And, as we entered on a desert tract,
Beyond this Troezen's border lies a beach
Sloping full down to yon Saronic Sea. 1200
There from earth's womb a noise like Zeus's thunder

- βαρὺν βρόμον μεθήκε φρικώδη κλύειν·
 ὀρθὸν δὲ κρατ' ἔστησαν οὐς τ' ἐς οὐρανὸν
 ἵπποι· παρ' ἡμῖν δ' ἦν φόβος νεανικὸς
 πόθεν ποτ' εἴη φθόγγος. εἰς δ' ἀλιρρόθους
 ἀκτὰς ἀποβλέψαντες ἱερὸν εἶδομεν
 κῦμ' οὐρανῷ στηρίζον, ὥστ' ἀφηρέθη
 Σκείρωνος ἀκτὰς ὄμμα τοῦμὸν εἰσορᾶν·
 ἔκρυπτε δ' Ἴσθμὸν καὶ πέτραν Ἀσκληπιοῦ.
 1210 κάπειτ' ἀνοιδῆσάν τε καὶ πέριξ ἀφρὸν
 πολὺν καχλάζον ποντίῳ φυσῆματι
 χωρεῖ πρὸς ἀκτάς, οὐ τέθριππος ἦν ὄχος.
 αὐτῷ δὲ σὺν κλύδωνι καὶ τρικυμῖα
 κῦμ' ἐξέθηκε ταῦρον, ἄγριον τέρας,
 οὐ πάσα μὲν χθὼν φθέγματος πληρουμένη
 φρικῶδες ἀντεφθέγγετ', εἰσορώσι δὲ
 κρεῖσσον θέαμα δεργμάτων ἐφαίνετο.
 εὐθύς δὲ πῶλοις δεινὸς ἐμπίπτει φόβος·
 καὶ δεσπότης μὲν ἵππικοῖσιν ἦθεσι
 1220 πολὺς ξυνοικῶν ἦρπασ' ἡνίας χερσίν,
 ἔλκει δέ, κώπην ὥστε ναυβάτης ἀνὴρ,
 ἱμᾶσιν εἰς τοῦπισθεν ἀρτήσας δέμας·
 αἱ δ' ἐνδακοῦσαι στόμια πυριγενῇ γναθμοῖς
 βία φέρουσιν, οὔτι ναυκλήρου χερὸς
 οὔθ' ἵπποδέσμων οὔτε κολλητῶν ὄχων
 μεταστρέφουσαι. καὶ μὲν εἰς τὰ μαλθακὰ
 γαίας ἔχων οἶακας εὐθύνοι δρόμον,
 προῦφαίνετ' εἰς τοῦμπροσθεν, ὥστ' ἀναστρέφειν,
 ταῦρος, φόβῳ τέτρωρον ἐκμαίνων ὄχον·
 1230 εἰ δ' εἰς πέτρας φέροντο μαργώσαι φρένας,
 σιγῇ πελάζων ἀντυγι ξυνείπετο
 εἰς τοῦθ' ἕως ἔσφηλε κἀνεχαίτισεν,
 ἀψῖδα πέτρῳ προσβαλὼν ὀχήματος.

HIPPOLYTUS

Made muffled roaring, a blood-curdling sound.
Then the steeds lifted head and pricked the ear ;
And thrilled through us most vehement dismay
Whence might the sound be. To the sea-lashed
shores

Then glanced we, and a surge unearthly saw
Up-columned to the sky, that from my sight
Shrouded was all the beach Scironian ;
Veiled was the Isthmus and Asclepius' Crag.
Then swelling higher, higher, and spurting forth 1210
All round a cloud of foam and sea-blown spray,
Shoreward it rusheth, toward the four-horse car.

Then from the breaker's midst and hugest surge
The wave belched forth a bull, a monster fierce,
With whose throat-thunder all the land was filled,
And echoed awfully, as on our gaze
He burst, a sight more dread than eyes could bear.
Straightway wild panic falleth on the steeds :
Yet their lord, wholly conversant with wont
Of horses, caught the reins in both his hands, 1220
And tugs, as shipman tugs against the oar,
Throwing his body's weight against the reins.
But on the fire-forged bits they clenched their teeth,
And whirled him on o'ermastered, recking not
Of steering hand, or curb, or strong car's weight.
And if, yet holding to the chariot-helm,
Toward the smooth ground he strove to guide their
course,

Aye showed that bull in front, to turn them back,
Maddening with fright the fourfold chariot-team.
If toward the rocks they rushed with frenzied heart, 1230
Fast by the rail in silence followed he
On, till he fouled and overset the car,
Dashing against a rock the chariot-felly.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

σύμφυρτα δ' ἦν ἅπαντα· σύριγγές τ' ἄνω
 τροχῶν ἐπήδων ἀξόνων τ' ἐνήλατα.
 αὐτὸς δ' ὁ τλήμων ἠνίαισιν ἐμπλακεῖς
 δεσμὸν δυσεξήνυστον ἔλκεται δεθείς,
 σποδοῦμενος μὲν πρὸς πέτραις φίλον κάρα,
 θραύων δὲ σάρκας, δεινὰ δ' ἐξαυδῶν κλύειν·
 1240 στήτ', ὧ φάτναισι ταῖς ἐμαῖς τεθραμμένοι,
 μή μ' ἐξαλείψητ'· ὧ πατρὸς τάλαιν' ἀρά.
 τίς ἄνδρ' ἄριστον βούλεται σῶσαι παρῶν ;
 πολλοὶ δὲ βουλευθέντες ὑστέρφ ποδὶ
 ἐλειπόμεσθα. χῶ μὲν ἐκ δεσμῶν λυθεῖς
 τμητῶν ἱμάντων οὐ κάτοιδ' ὅτῳ τρόπῳ
 πίπτει, βραχὺν δὲ βίοτον ἐμπνέων ἔτι·
 ἵπποι δ' ἐκρυφθεν καὶ τὸ δύστηνον τέρας
 ταύρου λεπαίας οὐ κάτοιδ' ὅπου χθονός.
 δοῦλος μὲν οὖν ἔγωγε σὼν δόμων, ἀναξ,
 1250 ἀτὰρ τοσοῦτόν γ' οὐ δυνήσομαί ποτε
 τὸν σὸν πιθέσθαι παῖδ' ὅπως ἐστὶν κακός,
 οὐδ' εἰ γυναικῶν πᾶν κρεμασθείη γένος,
 καὶ τὴν ἐν Ἰδῇ γραμμάτων πλήσειέ τις
 πεύκην, ἐπεὶ νιν ἐσθλὸν ὄντ' ἐπίσταμαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

αἰαῖ· κέκρανται συμφορὰ νέων κακῶν,
 οὐδ' ἔστι μοίρας τοῦ χρεῶν τ' ἀπαλλαγῇ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

μίσει μὲν ἀνδρὸς τοῦ πεπονθότος τάδε
 λόγοισιν ἥσθην τοῖσδε· νῦν δ' αἰδούμενος
 θεοῦς τ' ἐκεῖνόν θ', οὐνεκ' ἐστὶν ἐξ ἐμοῦ,
 1260 οὔθ' ἡδομαι τοῖσδ' οὔτ' ἐπάχθομαι κακοῖς.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

πῶς οὖν ; κομίζεις, ἢ τί χρὴ τὸν ἄθλιον
 δράσαντας ἡμᾶς σῇ χαρίζεσθαι φρενί ;

HIPPOLYTUS

Then all was turmoil : upward leapt in air
Naves of the wheels and linchpins of the axles.
And he, unhappy, tangled in the reins,
Bound in indissoluble bonds, is haled
Dashing his head against the cruel rocks,
Rending his flesh, outshrieking piteous cries—
“ O stay, ye horses nurtured at my cribs, 1240
Destroy me not !—ah, father's curse ill-starred !
Will no one save an utter-innocent man ? ”
Ah, many willed, but far behind were left
With feet outstripped. Loosed from the toils at
last

Of clean-cut reins,—I know not in what wise,—
He falls, yet breathing for short space of life.
Vanished the steeds and that accursèd monster,
The bull, mid rock-strewn ground, I know not where.

Thrall am I verily of thine house, O king ;
Howbeit so foul a charge—I never can 1250
Believe it of thy son, that he is vile,
Not though all womankind should hang themselves,
Though one should fill with writing every pine
In Ida :—he is righteous, this I know.

CHORUS

Woe for accomplishment of new disaster !
No refuge is there from the doom of fate.

THESEUS

For hatred of the man who thus hath fared,
Glad for this tale was I : but now, for awe
Of heaven, and for that he is yet my son,
Glad for this judgment am I not, nor grieved. 1260

MESSENGER

How then ?—must we bear yonder broken man
Hither ?—or in what wise perform thy pleasure ?

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

φρόντιζ'· ἐμοῖς δὲ χρώμενος βουλευμασιν
οὐκ ὤμους εἰς σὸν παῖδα δυστυχοῦντ' ἔσει.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

κομίζετ' αὐτόν, ὥς ἰδὼν ἐν ὄμμασι
τὸν τᾶμ' ἀπαρνηθέντα μὴ χρᾶναι λέχη
λόγοις τ' ἐλέγξω δαιμόνων τε συμφοραῖς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σὺ τὰν θεῶν ἄκαμπ-
τον φρένα καὶ βροτῶν
ἄγεις, Κύπρι· σὺν δ'
1270 ὁ ποικιλόπτερος ἀμφιβαλὼν
ὥκυτάτῳ πτερῶ·
ποτᾶται 'πὶ γαῖαν εὐάχητόν θ'
ἄλμυρόν ἐπὶ πόντον.
θέλγει δ' Ἔρως, ᾧ μαινομένα κραδίᾳ
πτανὸς ἐφορμάσῃ
χρυσοφαῆς,
φύσιν ὀρεσκόων
σκυλάκων πελαγίων θ' ὅσα τε γᾶ τρέφει,
τὰν Ἄλιος αἰθόμενος δέρκεται,
1280 ἄνδρας τε συμπάντων δὲ
βασιληίδα τιμάν, Κύπρι,
τῶνδε μόνα κρατύνεις.

HIPPOLYTUS

Bethink thee : if my counsel thou wilt heed,
Harsh to thy stricken son thou wilt not be.

THESEUS

Bear him, that I may see before mine eyes
Him who denied that he had stained my bed,
By words and heaven's requital to convict him.

[*Exit* MESSENGER.]

CHORUS

Love, under thy dominion unbending hearts bow low—
Gods' hearts, and hearts of mortals ; when, flashing
through thy portals

On glory-gleaming pinion, flits Eros to and fro, 1270
Love, under thy dominion unbending hearts bow low.

Gold-glittering wings wide-soaring, they rain down
witchery :

[phant sailing,
O'er maddened hearts prevailing, o'er earth trium-
O'er music of the roaring of spray-bemantled sea,
Gold-glittering wings wide-soaring, they rain down
witchery.

He kindleth with his yearning all things of earth-
born race :

[he filleth :
The mountain's whelps he thrilleth, the ocean's brood
Where'er the sun's eye burning down looketh on
earth's face, [born race.

He kindleth with his yearning all things of earth-

They bend—all, all are bending, Love-queen, beneath 1280
thy hand ! [royal

O crownèd brows, whom loyal vassals acclaim sole-
By spells all-comprehending in sky and sea and land ;
They bend—all, all are bending, Love-queen, beneath
thy hand !

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ARTEMIS

σὲ τὸν εὐπατρίδαν Αἰγέως κέλομαι
παῖδ' ἐπακούσαι·

Λητοῦς δὲ κόρη σ' Ἄρτεμις αὐδῶ.

Θησεῦ, τί τάλας τοῖσδε συνήδει,
παῖδ' οὐχ ὁσίως σὸν ἀποκτείνας,
ψευδέσι μύθοις ἀλόχου πεισθεὶς
ἀφανῇ; φανεράν δ' ἔσχεθες ἄτην.

1290 πῶς οὐχ ὑπὸ γῆς τάρταρα κρύπτεις
δέμας αἰσχυνθεὶς,

ἢ πτηνὸς ἄνω μεταβὰς βίοτον
πήματος ἔξω πόδα τοῦδ' ἀνέχεις;
ὥς ἔν γ' ἀγαθοῖς ἀνδράσιν οὐ σοι
κτητὸν βίотου μέρος ἐστίν.

ἄκουε, Θησεῦ, σῶν κακῶν κατάστασιν·
καίτοι προκόψω γ' οὐδέν, ἀλγυνῶ δὲ σέ.
ἀλλ' εἰς τόδ' ἦλθον, παιδὸς ἐκδεῖξαι φρένα
τοῦ σοῦ δικαίαν, ὥς ὑπ' εὐκλείας θάνῃ,

1300 καὶ σῆς γυναικὸς οἴστρον ἢ τρόπον τινὰ
γενναιότητα· τῆς γὰρ ἐχθίστης θεῶν
ἡμῖν, ὅσαισι παρθένειος ἡδονή,
δηχθεῖσα κέντροις παιδὸς ἡράσθη σέθεν.

γνώμη δὲ νικᾶν τὴν Κύπριν πειρωμένη
τροφου διώλετ' οὐχ ἐκούσα μηχαναῖς,
ἢ σῶ δι' ὄρκων παιδὶ σημαίνει νόσον.
ὁ δ', ὥσπερ ὦν δίκαιος, οὐκ ἐφέσπετο
λόγοισιν, οὐδ' αὖ πρὸς σέθεν κακούμενος
ὄρκων ἀφείλε πίστιν, εὖσεβῆς γεγώς.

1310 ἢ δ' εἰς ἔλεγχον μὴ πέση φοβουμένη
ψευδεῖς γραφὰς ἔγραψε καὶ διώλεσε
δόλοισι σὸν παῖδ'· ἀλλ' ὅμως ἔπεισέ σε.

HIPPOLYTUS

Enter ARTEMIS, veiled in a nectar-breathing cloud.

ARTEMIS

Thou high-born scion of Aegeus, I call upon thee :

Theseus, give ear unto me.

It is Artemis, Leto's Daughter, that nameth thy name :

Why dost thou joy in thy shame, [moved
Who hast murdered thy son unrighteously, thereto

By the lies of thy wife unproved ? [found.
Ruin and wrack in the sight of the sun hast thou

How wilt thou hide underground 1290
Thy dishonour in hell, or upsoaring mid clouds, veil there

Thy life of remorse and despair ?
For the part that was erstwhile thine in the good man's lot,

Behold, it is not.

Theseus, hear thou the posture of thy woes :—

Yet have I no help for thee, only pain ;

But I have come to show the righteousness

Of thy son, that in fair fame he may die,

And thy wife's fever-flame,—yet in some sort 1300

Her nobleness. She, stung by goads of her

Whom we, who joy in purity, abhor

Most of all Gods, was lovesick for thy son.

Her reason fought her passion, and she died

Through schemes wherein she had no part: her nurse

Told under oath-seal to thy son her pangs :

He, even as was righteous, would not heed

The tempting ; no, nor when sore-wronged of thee

Broke he the oath's pledge, for he feared the Gods.

But she, adread to be of sin convict, 1310

Wrote that false writing, and by treachery so

Destroyed thy son :—and thou believedst her !

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

οἷμοι.

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

1320

δάκνει σε, Θησεῦ, μῦθος ; ἀλλ' ἔχ' ἥσυχος,
τοῦνθένδ' ἀκούσας ὥς ἂν οἰμώξης πλέον.
ἄρ' οἶσθα πατρὸς τρεῖς ἄρας σαφεῖς ἔχων ;
ὦν τὴν μίαν παρεῖλες, ὦ κάκιστε σύ,
εἰς παῖδα τὸν σόν, ἐξὸν εἰς ἐχθρόν τινα.
πατὴρ μὲν οὖν σοι πόντιος φρονῶν καλῶς
ἔδωχ' ὅσον περ χρῆν, ἐπεὶ περ ἦνεσεν
σὺ δ' ἔν τ' ἐκείνῳ κὰν ἐμοὶ φαίνει κακός,
ὃς οὔτε πίστιν οὔτε μάντεων ὅπα
ἔμεινας, οὐκ ἤλεγξας, οὐ χρόνῳ μακρῷ
σκέψιν παρέσχες, ἀλλὰ θάσσον ἢ σ' ἐχρήν
ἄρας ἐφῆκας παιδὶ καὶ κατέκτανες.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

δέσποιν', ὀλοίμην.

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

1330

δεῖν' ἐπραξας, ἀλλ' ὁμως
ἔτ' ἔστι σοὶ καὶ τῶνδε συγγνώμης τυχεῖν.
Κύπρις γὰρ ἤθελ' ὥστε γίνεσθαι τάδε,
πληροῦσα θυμόν. θεοῖσι δ' ὧδ' ἔχει νόμος·
οὐδεὶς ἀπαντᾶν βούλεται προθυμία
τῇ τοῦ θέλοντος, ἀλλ' ἀφιστάμεσθ' αἰεί.
ἐπεὶ σάφ' ἴσθι, Ζῆνα μὴ φοβουμένη
οὐκ ἂν ποτ' ἦλθον εἰς τόδ' αἰσχύνης ἐγὼ
ὥστ' ἄνδρα πάντων φίλτατον βροτῶν ἐμοὶ
θανεῖν ἐᾶσαι. τὴν δέ σὴν ἀμαρτίαν
τὸ μὴ εἰδέναι μὲν πρῶτον ἐκλύει κάκης·
ἔπειτα δ' ἡ θανοῦσ' ἀνῆλωσεν γυνή
λόγων ἐλέγχους ὥστε σὴν πείσαι φρένα.
μάλιστα μὲν νυν σοὶ τάδ' ἔρρωγεν κακά,

HIPPOLYTUS

THESEUS

Ah me !

ARTEMIS

Is it torture, Theseus?—Nay, but hear me out,
That hearing all thou mayst the more lament.
Thy sire's sure curses three—rememberest them ?
One hast thou thus misused, O villain thou,
Against thy son, which might have quelled a foe !
Thy sire the Sea-king, in his love's despite,
Gave as he needs must, seeing he had pledged
him :

Yet wicked in his eyes and mine art thou, 1320
Who wouldst not wait for proof, nor prophet's voice,
Nor yet make inquisition, nor let time
Slowly reveal all, but with criminal haste
Didst hurl the curse upon thy son, and slay.

THESEUS

Queen, ruin seize me !

ARTEMIS

Deep thy sin : but yet
Even thou for this mayst win forgiveness still :
For Cypris willed that all this should befall
To glut her spite. And this the Gods' wont is :—
None doth presume to thwart the fixed design
Willed by his fellow : still aloof we stand. 1330
Else be thou sure that, but for dread of Zeus,
I never would have known this depth of shame,
To suffer one, of all men best beloved
Of me, to die. But thy transgression, first,
Thine ignorance from utter sin redeems ;
Then, by her death thy wife made void all test
Of these her words, and won thy credence so.
Now, most on thee this storm of woe hath burst ;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

1340 *λύπη δὲ κάμοι· τοὺς γὰρ εὐσεβεῖς θεοὶ
θνήσκοντας οὐ χαίρουσι· τοὺς γε μὴν κακοὺς
αὐτοῖς τέκνοισι καὶ δόμοις ἐξόλλυμεν.*

ΧΟΡΟΣ

*καὶ μὴν ὁ τάλας ὄδε δὴ στείχει,
σάρκας νεαρὰς ξανθὸν τε κάρα
διαλυμανθείς. ὦ πόνος οἴκων,
οἶον ἐκράνθη δίδυμον μελάθροισι
πένθος θεόθεν καταληπτόν.*

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

*αἰαῖ αἰαῖ·
δύστηνος ἐγώ, πατὴρ ἐξ ἀδίκου
χρησμοῖς ἀδίκοις διελυμάνθην.
1350 ἀπόλωλα τάλας, οἶμοι μοι.
διὰ μου κεφαλῆς ἄσσουσ' ὀδύνη,
κατὰ δ' ἐγκέφαλον πηδᾷ σφάκελος.
σχές, ἀπειρηκὸς σῶμ' ἀναπαύσω.
ἔ ἔ·
ὦ στυγνὸν ὄχημ' ἵππειον, ἐμῆς
βόσκημα χερός,
διὰ μ' ἔφθειας, κατὰ δ' ἔκτεινας.
φεῦ φεῦ· πρὸς θεῶν, ἀτρέμας, δμῶες,
χρὸς ἐλκώδους ἄπτεσθε χεροῖν.
1360 τίς ἐφέστηκεν δεξιὰ πλευροῖς ;
πρόσφορά μ' αἴρετε, σύντονα δ' ἔλκετε
τὸν κακοδαίμονα καὶ κατάρατον*

HIPPOLYTUS

Yet grief is mine : for when the righteous die
The Gods joy not. The wicked, and withal 1340
Their children and their homes, do we destroy.

CHORUS

Lo, lo, the stricken one borne
Hitherward, with his young flesh torn
And his golden head of its glory shorn !
Ah, griefs of the house !—what doom
Twofold on thine halls hath come
By the Gods' will shrouded in sorrow's gloom !
Enter bearers with HIPPOLYTUS.

HIPPOLYTUS

Woe, woe for a son
By the doom of his sire
All marred and undone ! 1350
Through mine head leapeth fire
Of the agony-flashes, and throbberth my brain like a
hard-stricken lyre.

Let me rest—ah forbear !—
For my strength is sped.
Cursèd horses, ye were
Of mine own hands fed,
Yet me have ye wholly destroyed, yet me have ye
stricken dead !

For the Gods' sake, bear
Me full gently, each thrall !
Thou to right, have a care !— 1360
Soft let your hands fall ;
Tenderly bear the sore-mangled, on-stepping in
time, one and all,

The unhappy on-bearing,
And cursèd, I ween,

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

πατρὸς ἀμπλακίαις. Ζεῦ Ζεῦ, τάδ' ὀράς ;
 ὃδ' ὁ σεμνὸς ἐγὼ καὶ θεοσέπτωρ,
 ὃδ' ὁ σωφροσύνη πάντας ὑπερσχῶν
 προὔπτον ἐς Ἄϊδην στείχω κατὰ γῆς,
 ὀλέσας βίοτον· μόχθους δ' ἄλλως
 τῆς εὐσεβίας
 εἰς ἀνθρώπους ἐπόνησα.

1370

αἰαῖ αἰαῖ·
 καὶ νῦν ὀδύνα μ' ὀδύνα βαίνει.
 μέθετέ με τάλανα·
 καί μοι Θάνατος Παιὰν ἔλθοι.
 προσαπόλλυτέ μ' ὅλλυτε τὸν δυσδαί-
 μονά μ'· ἀμφιτόμον λόγχας ἔραμαι
 διαμοιρᾶσαι,
 διὰ τ' εὐνᾶσαι τὸν ἐμὸν βίοτον.
 ὦ πατρὸς ἐμοῦ δύστανος ἀρά·
 μαιφόνων [τε] συγγόνων,
 1380 παλαιῶν προγεννητόρων
 ἐξορίζεται κακὸν οὐδὲ μέλλει,
 ἔμολε τ' ἐπ' ἐμέ
 τί ποτε τὸν οὐδὲν ὄντ' ἐπαίτιον κακῶν ;
 ἰὼ μοι, τί φῶ ;
 πῶς ἀπαλλάξω βιοτὰν
 ἐμὰν τοῦδ' ἀναλγήτου πάθους ;
 εἴθε με κοιμίσειε τὸν δυσδαίμον'
 Ἄϊδου μέλαινα νύκτερός τ' ἀνάγκα.

ARTEMIS

1390

ὦ τλήμον, οἷ᾽ ἀ συμφορᾷ συνεζύγης·
 τὸ δ' εὐγενές σε τῶν φρενῶν ἀπώλεσεν.

HIPPOLYTUS

Of his father's own erring :—

Ah Zeus, hast thou seen ?

Innocent I, ever fearing the Gods, who was wholly
heart-clean

Above all men beside,—

Lo, how am I thrust

Unto Hades, to hide

My life in the dust !

All vainly I revered God, and in vain unto man
was I just.

Let the stricken one be !—

1370

Ah, mine anguish again !—

Give ye sleep unto me,

Death-salve for my pain,

The sleep of the sword for the wretched—I long, oh
I long to be slain.

Dire curse of my father !—

Sins, long ago wrought

Of mine ancestors, gather :

1380

Their doom tarries not,

But the scourge overfloweth the innocent—wherefore
on me is it brought ?

Ah for words of a spell,

That my soul might take flight

From the tortures, with fell

Unrelentings that smite !

Oh for the blackness of Hades, the sleep of Necess-
ity's night !

ARTEMIS

Unhappy, bowed 'neath what disaster's yoke !

Thine own heart's nobleness hath ruined thee.

1390

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ἔα·

ὦ θεῖον ὁδμῆς πνεῦμα· καὶ γὰρ ἐν κακοῖς
ὦν ἡσθόμην σου κἀνεκουφίσθην δέμας·
ἔστ' ἐν τόποισι τοισίδ' Ἄρτεμις θεά;

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

ὦ τλήμον, ἔστι, σοί γε φιλτάτη θεῶν.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὀρᾶς με, δέσποιν', ὥς ἔχω, τὸν ἄθλιον;

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

ὀρῶ· κατ' ὅσων δ' οὐ θέμις βαλεῖν δάκρυ.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστι σοι κυναγὸς οὐδ' ὑπηρέτης,

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

οὐ δῆτ'· ἀτάρ μοι προσφιλὴς γ' ἀπόλλυσαι.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐδ' ἱππονώμας οὐδ' ἀγαλμάτων φύλαξ.

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

1400

Κύπρις γὰρ ἡ πανοὔργος ὧδ' ἐμήσατο.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὦμοι· φρονῶ δὴ δαίμον' ἧ μ' ἀπώλεσε.

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

τιμῆς ἐμέμφθη, σωφρονοῦντι δ' ἤχθετο.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

τρεῖς ὄντας ἡμᾶς ὤλεσ', ἥσθημαι, Κύπρις.

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

πατέρα γε καὶ σὲ καὶ τρίτην ξυνάορον.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὦμωξα τοίνυν καὶ πατρὸς δυσπραξίας.

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

ἐξηπατήθη δαίμονος βουλευέμασιν.

HIPPOLYTUS

HIPPOLYTUS

Ah, perfume-breath celestial!—mid my pains
I feel thee, and mine anguish is assuaged.
Lo in this place the Goddess Artemis!

ARTEMIS

Yea, hapless one, of Gods best friend to thee.

HIPPOLYTUS

O Queen, seest thou my plight—the stricken one?

ARTEMIS

I see—but tears are to mine eyes forbid.

HIPPOLYTUS

None now shall hark thine hounds, nor do thee
service—

ARTEMIS

Ah no! Yet dear to me thou perishest.

HIPPOLYTUS

Nor tend thy steeds, nor guard thine images.

ARTEMIS

This all-pernicious Cypris hath contrived—

1400

HIPPOLYTUS

Ah me! what Goddess blasts me now I know!

ARTEMIS

Jealous for honour, wroth with chastity.

HIPPOLYTUS

Three hath one hand destroyed; I see it now.

ARTEMIS

Thy father—thee—thy father's wife the third.

HIPPOLYTUS

Yea, and I wail my father's misery.

ARTEMIS

By plots of deity was he beguiled.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὦ δυστάλας σὺ τῆσδε συμφορᾶς, πάτερ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὄλωλα, τέκνον, οὐδέ μοι χάρις βίου.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

στένω σὲ μᾶλλον ἢ 'μὲ τῆς ἀμαρτίας.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1410 εἰ γὰρ γενοίμην, τέκνον, ἀντὶ σοῦ νεκρός.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὦ δῶρα πατρὸς σοῦ Ποσειδῶνος πικρά.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὥς μήποτ' ἐλθεῖν ὦφελ' εἰς τοῦμόν στόμα.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

τί δ' ; ἔκτανές τ' ἄν μ', ὥς τότ' ἦσθ' ὠργισμένος.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

δόξης γὰρ ἤμεν πρὸς θεῶν ἐσφαλμένοι.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

φεῦ·

εἴθ' ἦν ἀραῖον δαίμοσιν βροτῶν γένος.

ΑΡΤΕΜΙΣ

ἔασον· οὐ γὰρ οὐδὲ γῆς ὑπὸ ζόφον
θεᾶς ἄτιμοι Κύπριδος ἐκ προθυμίας
ὀργαὶ κατασκήψουσιν εἰς τὸ σὸν δέμας
σῆς εὐσεβείας κάγαθῆς φρενὸς χάριν.

1420

ἐγὼ γὰρ αὐτῆς ἄλλον ἐξ ἐμῆς χερὸς
ὃς ἂν μάλιστα φίλτατος κυρῇ βροτῶν
τόξοις ἀφύκτοις τοῖσδε τιμωρήσομαι.
σοὶ δ', ὦ ταλαίπωρ, ἀντὶ τῶνδε τῶν κακῶν
τιμὰς μεγίστας ἐν πόλει Τροιζηνίᾳ
δώσω· κόραι γὰρ ἄζυγες γάμων ἴπαρος
κόμας κεροῦνται σοι, δι' αἰῶνος μακροῦ
πένθη μέγιστα δακρύων καρπουμένῳ.

HIPPOLYTUS

HIPPOLYTUS

Ah father, woe is thee for this mischance !

THESEUS

I am slain, my son : no joy have I in life !

HIPPOLYTUS

More than myself I mourn thee for thine error.

THESEUS

Would God I could but die for thee, my son ! 1410

HIPPOLYTUS

Ah, bitter gifts of that Sea-god, thy sire !

THESEUS

Ah that the word had never passed my lips !

HIPPOLYTUS

Wherefore ?—thou wouldst for wrath have slain me still.

THESEUS

Yea, for the Gods had caused my wit to stumble.

HIPPOLYTUS

Oh that men's curses could but strike the Gods !

ARTEMIS

Let be : for even in the nether gloom
Not unavenged shall be the stroke that fell
Upon thy frame through rage of Cypris' spite,
For thy pure soul's and for thy reverence' sake.
For upon one, her minion, with mine hand— 1420
Whoso is dearest of all men to her—
With these unerring shafts will I avenge me.
And to thee, hapless one, for these thy woes
High honours will I give in Troezen-town.
Ere their espousals shall all maids unwed
For thee cut off their hair : through age on age
Full harvests shalt thou reap of tears of grieving.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

1430 αἰὲ δὲ μουσοποιὸς εἰς σὲ παρθένων
 ἔσται μέριμνα, κοῦκ ἀνώνυμος πεσὼν
 ἔρως ὁ Φαίδρας εἰς σὲ σιγηθήσεται.
 σὺ δ', ὦ γεραιοῦ τέκνον Αἰγέως, λαβὲ
 σὸν παῖδ' ἐν ἀγκάλαισι καὶ προσέλκυσαι
 ἄκων γὰρ ὤλεσάς νιν· ἀνθρώποισι δὲ
 θεῶν διδόντων εἰκὸς ἑξαμαρτάνειν.
 καὶ σοὶ παραινῶ πατέρα μὴ στυγεῖν σέθεν,
 'Ιππόλυτ'. ἔχεις γὰρ μοῖραν ἢ διεφθάρης.
 καὶ χαῖρ'· ἐμοὶ γὰρ οὐ θέμις φθιτοὺς ὀρᾶν
 οὐδ' ὄμμα χραίνειν θανασίμοισιν ἐκπνοαῖς·
 ὀρῶ δέ σ' ἤδη τοῦδε πλησίον κακοῦ.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

1440 χαίρουσα καὶ σὺ στείχε, παρθέν' ὀλβία·
 μακρὰν δὲ λείπεις ῥαδίως ὁμιλίαν.
 λῦω δὲ νεῖκος πατρὶ χρηζούσης σέθεν·
 καὶ γὰρ πάροιθε σοῖς ἐπειθόμην λόγοις.
 αἰαῖ, κατ' ὅσων κιγχάνει μ' ἤδη σκότος·
 λαβοῦ, πάτερ, μου καὶ κατόρθωσον δέμας.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὦμοι, τέκνον, τί δρᾷς με τὸν δυσδαίμονα;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὄλωλα καὶ δὴ νερτέρων ὀρῶ πύλας.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ἢ τὴν ἐμὴν ἀναγνον ἐκλιπὼν φρένα ;¹

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ σε τοῦδ' ἐλευθερῶ φόνου.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

1450 τί φῆς; ἀφίης αἷματός μ' ἐλεύθερον;

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

τὴν τοξόδαμνον παρθένον μαρτύρομαι.

¹ Some MSS. have χέρα;

HIPPOLYTUS

Ever of thee song-waking memory
Shall live in virgins ; nor shall Phaedra's love
Forgotten in thy story be unhymned. 1430
But thou, O son of ancient Aegeus, take
Thy child into thine arms, and fold him close.
Not of thy will thou slewest him, and well
May men transgress when Gods are thrusting on.
Thee too I charge, Hippolytus—hate not
Thy father : 'tis by fate thou perishest.
Farewell : I may not gaze upon the dead,
Nor may with dying gasps pollute my sight :
And now I see that thou art near the end.

[*Exit* ARTEMIS.]

HIPPOLYTUS

Farewell to thy departing, Maiden blest. 1440
Light falls on thee long fellowship's severance !
Lo, I forgive my father at thy suit,
As heretofore have I obeyed thy word.
Ah, o'er mine eyes even now the darkness draws !
Take, father, take my body and upraise.

THESEUS

Ah me ! what dost thou, child, to hapless me ?

HIPPOLYTUS

I am gone—yea, I behold the gates of death !

THESEUS

Wilt leave me—and my conscience murder-stained ?

HIPPOLYTUS

No, no ! I do absolve thee of my death.

THESEUS

How say'st thou ?—dost assoil me of thy blood ? 1450

HIPPOLYTUS

I call to witness Bow-queen Artemis.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΣ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὦ φίλταθ', ὡς γενναῖος ἐκφαίνει πατρί.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

τοιῶνδε παίδων γνησίῳ εὖχου τυχεῖν.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὦ μοι φρενὸς σῆς εὐσεβοῦς τε ἀγαθῆς.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

ὦ χαῖρε καὶ σύ, χαῖρε πολλά μοι, πάτερ.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

μή νυν προδῶς με, τέκνον, ἀλλὰ καρτέρει.

ΙΠΠΟΛΥΤΟΣ

κεκαρτέρηται τᾶμ' ὄλωλα γάρ, πάτερ·
κρίψον δέ μου πρόσωπον ὡς τάχος πέπλοις.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὦ κλείν' Ἀθηνῶν Παλλάδος θ' ὀρίσματα,
οἴου στερήσεσθ' ἀνδρός. ὦ τλήμων ἐγώ·
ὡς πολλά, Κύπρι, σὼν κακῶν μεμνήσομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κοινὸν τόδ' ἄχος πᾶσι πολίταις
ἦλθεν ἀέλπτως.
πολλῶν δακρύων ἔσται πίτυλος·
τῶν γὰρ μεγάλων ἀξιοπενθεῖς
φῆμαι μάλλον κατέχουσιν.

ὦ μάκαρ, οἷας ἔλαχες τιμάς,
'Ιππόλυθ' ἥρως, διὰ σωφροσύνην·
οὐποτε θνητοῖς
ἀρετῆς ἄλλη δύναμις μείζων·
ἦλθε γὰρ ἢ πρόσθ' ἢ μετόπισθεν
τῆς εὐσεβίας χάρις ἐσθλή.

HIPPOLYTUS

THESEUS

Dearest, how noble show'st thou to thy sire !

HIPPOLYTUS

Pray to have such sons—sons in wedlock born.

THESEUS

Woe for thy reverent soul, thy righteous heart !

HIPPOLYTUS

Father, farewell thou too—untold farewells !

THESEUS

Forsake me not, my son !—be strong to bear !

HIPPOLYTUS

My strength is overborne—I am gone, my father.
Cover my face with mantles with all speed. [*Dies.*

THESEUS

O bounds of Athens, Pallas' glorious realm,
What hero will be lost to you ! Woe's me !
Cypris, how oft shall I recall thy wrong !

1460

CHORUS

On the city hath lighted a stroke without warning,
On all hearts desolation.
Rain down, O ye fast-dropping tears of our mourning !
When the mighty are fallen, their burial-oblation
Is the wail of a nation.¹

[*Exeunt OMNES.*

¹ 1462-66 allude to the death of Pericles, which happened shortly before the representation of this play. The poet in fact changed, to meet the occasion, the original ending, which ran thus :—

O blest one, what honours have fallen to thee,
O hero, because of thy chastity ;
Never shall aught be more of worth
Than virtue unto the sons of earth ;
For soon or late on the fear of God
Goodly reward shall be bestowed.

[*Stobaeus, Florilegium.*]

MEDEA

ARGUMENT

WHEN the Heroes, who sailed in the ship *Argo* to bring home the Golden Fleece, came to the land of Colchis, they found that to win that treasure was a deed passing the might of mortal man, so terribly was it guarded by monsters magical, even fire-breathing bulls and an un-sleeping dragon. But *Aphrodite* caused *Medea* the sorceress, daughter of *Aeetes* the king of the land, to love *Jason* their captain, so that by her magic he overcame the bulls and the dragon. Then *Jason* took the Fleece, and *Medea* withal, for that he had pledged him to wed her in the land of Greece. But as they fled, *Absyrtus* her brother pursued them with a host of war, yet by *Medea's* devising was he slain. So they came to the land of *Iolcos*, and to *Pelias*, who held the kingdom which was *Jason's* of right. But *Medea* by her magic wrought upon *Pelias'* daughters so that they slew their father. Yet by reason of men's horror of the deed might not *Jason* and *Medea* abide in the land, and they came to *Corinth*. But there all men rejoiced for the coming of a hero so mighty in war and a lady renowned for wisdom unearthly, for that *Medea* was grandchild of the Sun-god. But after ten years, *Creon* the king of the land spake to *Jason*, saying, "Lo, I will give thee my daughter to wife, and thou shalt reign after me, if thou wilt put away thy wife *Medea*; but her and her two sons will I banish from the land." So *Jason* consented. And of this befell things strange and awful, which are told herein.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΩΝ

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ΑΙΓΕΤΣ

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ΠΑΙΔΕΣ ΜΗΔΕΙΑΣ

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

NURSE OF MEDEA'S CHILDREN.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN.¹

MEDEA.

CHORUS OF CORINTHIAN LADIES.

CREON, *King of Corinth.*

JASON.

AEGEUS, *King of Athens.*

MESSENGER.

CHILDREN OF MEDEA.

The Scene is in front of Jason's House at Corinth.

¹ *Paedagogus*.—A trusted servant, responsible for keeping the boys out of harm's way: he was present at their sports, accompanied them to and from school, and never let them be out of his sight. A similar institution is familiar to Englishmen resident in India.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

- Εἴθ' ὦφελ' Ἀργοῦς μὴ διαπτάσθαι σκάφος
Κόλχων ἐς αἶαν κυανέας Συμπληγάδας,
μηδ' ἐν νάπαισι Πηλίου πεσεῖν ποτε
τμηθεῖσα πεύκη, μηδ' ἐρετμῶσαι χέρας
ἀνδρῶν ἀριστέων οἳ τὸ πάγχρυσον δέρος
Πελία μετῆλθον. οὐ γὰρ ἂν δέσποιν' ἐμὴ
Μήδεια πύργους γῆς ἔπλευσ' Ἰωλκίας
ἔρωτι θυμὸν ἐκπλαγείσ' Ἰάσονος,
οὐδ' ἂν κτανεῖν πείσασα Πελιάδας κόρας
10 πατέρα κατῴκει τήνδε γῆν Κορινθίαν
ξὺν ἀνδρὶ καὶ τέκνοισιν, ἀνδάνουσα μὲν
φυγῇ πολιτῶν ὧν ἀφίκετο χθόνα,
αὐτὴ τε πάντα ξυμφέρουσ' Ἰάσωνι·
ἥπερ μεγίστη γίγνεται σωτηρία,
ὅταν γυνὴ πρὸς ἄνδρα μὴ διχοστατῇ.
νῦν δ' ἐχθρὰ πάντα, καὶ νοσεῖ τὰ φίλτατα.
προδοὺς γὰρ αὐτοῦ τέκνα δεσπότην τ' ἐμὴν
γάμοις Ἰάσων βασιλικοῖς εὐνάζεται,
γῆμας Κρέοντος παῖδ', ὃς αἰσυμνᾷ χθονός·
20 Μήδεια δ' ἡ δύστηνος ἠτιμασμένη
βοᾷ μὲν ὄρκους, ἀνακαλεῖ δὲ δεξιᾶς
πίστιν μεγίστην, καὶ θεοὺς μαρτύρεται
οἷας ἀμοιβῆς ἐξ Ἰάσονος κυρεῖ.
κεῖται δ' ἄσιτος, σῶμ' ὑφέϊσ' ἀλγηδόσι,

MEDEA

Enter NURSE of Medea's Children.

NURSE

WOULD God that Argo's hull had never flown
Through those blue Clashing Rocks to Colchis-
land,

Nor that the axe-hewn pine in Pelion's glens
Ever had fallen, nor filled with oars the hands
Of hero-princes, who at Pelias' hest
Quested the Golden Fleece ! My mistress then,
Medea, ne'er had sailed to Iolcos' towers
With love for Jason thrilled through all her soul,
Nor had on Pelias' daughters wrought to slay
Their sire, nor now in this Corinthian land
Dwelt with her lord and children, gladdening
By this her exile them whose land received her, 10
Yea, and in all things serving Jason's weal,
Which is the chief salvation of the home,
When wife stands not at variance with her lord.

Now all is hatred : love is sickness-stricken.
For Jason, traitor to his babes and her,
My mistress, weddeth with a child of kings,
Daughter of Creon ruler of the land.
And, slighted thus, Medea, hapless wife,
Cries on the oaths, invokes that mightiest pledge 20
Of the right hand, and calls the Gods to witness
What recompense from Jason she receives.
Fasting, with limbs in grief's abandonment

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τὸν πάντα συντήκουσα δακρύοις χρόνον,
ἐπεὶ πρὸς ἀνδρὸς ἦσθετ' ἡδίκημένη,
οὔτ' ὅμμ' ἐπαίρουσ' οὔτ' ἀπαλλάσσουσα γῆς
πρόσωπον· ὥς δὲ πέτρος ἢ θαλάσσιος
κλύδων ἀκούει νουθετουμένη φίλων·

- 30 ἦν μή ποτε στρέψασα πάλλευκον δέρην
αὐτὴ πρὸς αὐτὴν πατέρ' ἀποιμῶξη φίλον
καὶ γαίαν οἴκους θ', οὓς προδοῦσ' ἀφίκετο
μετ' ἀνδρὸς ὃς σφε νῦν ἀτιμάσας ἔχει.
ἔγνωκε δ' ἡ τάλαινα συμφορᾶς ὕπο
οἶον πατρώας μὴ ἀπολείπεσθαι χθονός.
στρυγεί δὲ παῖδας οὐδ' ὁρῶσ' εὐφραίνεται.
δέδοικα δ' αὐτὴν μή τι βουλευσῇ νέον·
βαρεῖα γὰρ φρήν, οὐδ' ἀνέξεται κακῶς
πάσχουσ'· ἐγὼ δα τήνδε, δειμαίνω τέ νιν,
40 [μὴ θηκτὸν ὥση φάσγανον δι' ἥπατος,
σιγῇ δόμους εἰσβάσ', ἵν' ἔστρωται λέχος,
ἢ καὶ τύραννον τόν τε γήμαντα κτάνη
κᾶπειτα μείζω συμφορὰν λάβῃ τινά.]
δεινὴ γάρ· οὔτοι ῥαδίως γε συμβαλὼν
ἔχθραν τις αὐτῇ καλλίνικον οἴσεται.
ἀλλ' οἷδε παῖδες ἐκ τρόχων πεπαυμένοι
στείχουσι, μητρὸς οὐδὲν ἐννοοῦμενοι
κακῶν· νέα γὰρ φροντὶς οὐκ ἀλγεῖν φιλεῖ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

- 50 παλαιὸν οἴκων κτῆμα δεσποίνης ἐμῆς,
τί πρὸς πύλαισι τήνδ' ἄγουσ' ἐρημίαν
ἔστηκας, αὐτὴ θρεομένη σαντῇ κακά ;
πῶς σοῦ μόνῃ Μήδεια λείπεσθαι θέλει ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

τέκνων ὁπαδὲ πρέσβυ τῶν Ἰάσονος,
χρηστοῖσι δούλοις ξυμφορὰ τὰ δεσποτῶν

MEDEA

Flung down, she weeps and wastes through all the
days

Since first she knew her lord's wrong done to her,
Never uplifting eye, nor turning ever
From earth her face. No more than rock or sea-wave
Hearkeneth she to friends that counsel her ;
Saving at whiles, when, lifting her white neck, 30
To herself she wails her father once beloved,
Her land, her home, forsaking which she came
Hither with him who holds her now contemned.
Alas for her ! she knows, by affliction taught,
How good is fatherland unforfeited.

She loathes her babes, joys not beholding them.
And what she may devise I dread to think.
Grim is her spirit, one that will not brook
Mishandling : yea, I know her, and I fear
Lest to her bridal bower she softly steal, 40
And through her own heart thrust the whetted knife,
Or slay the king and him that weds his child,
And get herself some doom yet worse thereby ;
For dangerous is she : who begins a feud
With her, not soon shall sing the triumph-song.
But lo, her boys, their racing-sport put by,
Draw near, all careless of their mother's wrongs,
For the young heart loves not to brood in grief.

Enter CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN, with boys.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

O ancient chattel of my mistress' home,
Why at the gates thus lonely standest thou, 50
Thyself unto thyself discoursing ills ?
How wills Medea to be left of thee ?

NURSE

O grey attendant thou of Jason's sons,
The hearts of faithful servants still are touched

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

κακῶς πίτνοντα καὶ φρενῶν ἀνθάπτεται.
ἐγὼ γὰρ εἰς τοῦτ' ἐκβέβηκ' ἀλγηδόνας,
ὥσθ' ἵμερός μ' ὑπῆλθε γῇ τε κούρανῳ
λέξαι μολούσῃ δεῦρο Μηδείας τύχας.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὐπω γὰρ ἡ τάλαινα παύεται γόων ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

60 ζηλῷ σ'· ἐν ἀρχῇ πῆμα κοῦδέπω μεσοῖ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

ὦ μῶρος, εἰ χρή δεσπότης εἰπεῖν τόδε·
ὥς οὐδὲν οἶδε τῶν νεωτέρων κακῶν.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

τί δ' ἔστιν, ὦ γεραίε ; μὴ φθόνει φράσαι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὐδέν· μετέγνων καὶ τὰ πρόσθ' εἰρημένα.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

μή, πρὸς γενείου, κρύπτε σύνδουλον σέθεν·
σιγῇ γάρ, εἰ χρή, τῶνδε θήσομαι πέρι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

70 ἤκουσά του λέγοντος οὐ δοκῶν κλύειν,
πεσσοὺς προσελθών, ἔνθα δὴ παλαίτατοι
θάσσουσι, σεμνὸν ἀμφὶ Πειρήνης ὕδωρ,
ὥς τούσδε παῖδας γῆς ἐλᾶν Κορινθίας
σὺν μητρὶ μέλλοι τῇσδε κοίρανος χθονὸς
Κρέων. ὁ μέντοι μῦθος εἰ σαφὴς ὄδε
οὐκ οἶδα· βουλοίμην δ' ἂν οὐκ εἶναι τόδε.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

καὶ ταῦτ' Ἰάσων παῖδας ἐξανέξεται
πάσχοντας, εἰ καὶ μητρὶ διαφορὰν ἔχει ;

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

παλαιὰ καινῶν λείπεται κηδευμάτων,
οὐκ ἔστ' ἐκεῖνος τοῖσδε δώμασιν φίλος.

MEDEA

By ill-betiding fortunes of their lords.
For I have sunk to such a depth of grief,
That yearning took me hitherward to come
And tell to earth and heaven my lady's plight.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Ceaseth not yet the hapless one from moan?

NURSE

Cease!—her pain scarce begun, far from its height! 60

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Ah fool!—if one may say it of his lords—
Little she knoweth of the latest blow.

NURSE

What is it, ancient? Grudge not thou to tell me.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Naught: I repent me of the word that 'scaped me.

NURSE

Nay, by thy beard, hide not from fellow-thrall—
Silence, if need be, will I keep thereof.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

I heard one saying—feigning not to hear,
As I drew near the old stone seats, where sit
The ancients round Peirene's hallowed fount,—
“Creon, this land's lord, is at point to banish 70
Mother and sons from soil Corinthian.”
Howbeit, if the tale I heard be true
I know not: fain were I it were not so.

NURSE

Will Jason brook such dealing with his sons,
Though from their mother he be wholly estranged?

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Old bonds of love are aye outrun by feet
Of new:—no friend is *he* unto this house.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἀπωλόμεσθ' ἄρ', εἰ κακὸν προσοίσομεν
νέον παλαιῷ, πρὶν τόδ' ἐξηντληκέναι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

80

ἀτὰρ σύ γ', οὐ γὰρ καιρὸς εἰδέναι τόδε
δέσποιναν, ἡσύχαζε καὶ σίγα λόγον.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ὦ τέκν', ἀκούεθ' οἷος εἰς ὑμᾶς πατήρ ;
ὄλοιτο μὲν μή· δεσπότης γάρ ἐστ' ἐμός·
ἀτὰρ κακός γ' ὢν εἰς φίλους ἀλίσκεται.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τίς δ' οὐχὶ θνητῶν ; ἄρτι γινώσκεις τόδε,
ὥς πᾶς τις αὐτὸν τοῦ πέλας μᾶλλον φιλεῖ,
οἱ μὲν δικαίως, οἱ δὲ καὶ κέρδους χάριν,
εἰ τούσδε γ' εὐνῆς εἵνεκ' οὐ στέργει πατήρ.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

90

ἴτ', εὖ γὰρ ἔσται, δωμάτων ἔσω, τέκνα.
σὺ δ' ὥς μάλιστα τούσδ' ἐρημώσας ἔχε,
καὶ μὴ πέλαζε μητρὶ δυσθυμουμένην.
ἤδη γὰρ εἶδον ὄμμα νιν ταυρουμένην
τοῖσδ' ὥς τι δρασείουσαν· οὐδὲ παύσεται
χόλου, σάφ' οἶδα, πρὶν κατασκήψαί τινα.
ἐχθρούς γε μέντοι, μὴ φίλους, δράσειέ τι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἰώ,
δύστανος ἐγὼ μελέα τε πόνων,
ἰώ μοί μοι, πῶς ἂν ὀλοίμαν ;

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

100

τόδ' ἐκεῖνο, φίλοι παῖδες· μήτηρ
κινεῖ κραδίαν, κινεῖ δὲ χόλον.
σπεύδετε θᾶσσον δώματος εἴσω,
καὶ μὴ πελάσῃτ' ὄμματος ἐγγύς,

MEDEA

NURSE

Ruined we are then, if we add fresh ill
To old, ere lightened be our ship of this.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

But thou—for 'tis not season that thy lady 80
Should know—keep silence, and speak not the
tale.

NURSE

Hear, babes, what father this is unto you !
I curse him—not : he is my master still :
But to his friends he stands convict of baseness.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

What man is not ? Hast learnt this only now,
That no man loves his neighbour as himself ?
Good cause have some, with most 'tis greed of gain—
As here : their sire for a bride's sake loves not these.

NURSE

Pass in, dear children, for it shall be well.
But thou, keep these apart to the uttermost : 90
Bring them not nigh their mother angry-souled.
For late I saw her glare, as glares a bull,
On these, as 'twere for mischief ; nor her wrath,
I know, shall cease, until its lightning strike.
To foes may she work ill, and not to friends !

MEDEA (*behind the scenes*)

O hapless I ! O miseries heaped on mine head !
Ah me ! ah me ! would God I were dead !

NURSE

Lo, darlings, the thing that I told you !
Lo the heart of your mother astir !
And astir is her anger : withhold you 100
From her sight, come not nigh unto her.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

μηδὲ προσέλθῃτ', ἀλλὰ φυλάσσεσθ'
ἄγριον ἦθος στυγεράν τε φύσιν
φρενὸς αὐθάδους.

ἴτε νῦν χωρεῖθ' ὥς τάχος εἴσω.
δῆλον δ' ἀρχῆς ἐξαιρόμενον
νέφος οἰμωγῆς ὥς τάχ' ἀνάψει
μείζονι θυμῷ· τί ποτ' ἐργάσεται
μεγαλόσπλαγχνος δυσκατάπαυστος
110 ψυχὴ δηχθεῖσα κακοῖσιν ;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

αἰαῖ,
ἔπαθον τλάμων ἔπαθον μεγάλων
ἄξι' ὀδυρμῶν· ὦ κατάρατοι
παῖδες ὄλοισθε στυγεράς ματρὸς
σὺν πατρί, καὶ πᾶς δόμος ἔρροι.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

ἰὼ μοί μοι, ἰὼ τλήμων.
τί δέ σοι παῖδες πατρὸς ἀμπλακίας
μετέχουσι ; τί τοῦσδ' ἔχθεις ; οἴμοι,
τέκνα, μή τι πάθῃθ' ὥς ὑπεραλγῶ.
δεινὰ τυράννων λήματα καὶ πως
120 ὀλίγ' ἀρχόμενοι, πολλὰ κρατοῦντες,
χαλεπῶς ὀργὰς μεταβάλλουσιν.
τὸ γὰρ εἰθίσθαι ζῆν ἐπ' ἴσοισιν
κρεῖσσον· ἐμοὶ γοῦν, εἰ μὴ μέγਾਲως,
ὀχυρῶς γ' εἷη καταγηράσκειν.

MEDEA

Haste, get you within : O beware ye
Of the thoughts as a wild-beast brood,
Of the nature too ruthless to spare ye
In its desperate mood.

Pass ye within now, departing
With all speed. It is plain to discern
How a cloud of lamenting, upstarting
From its viewless beginnings, shall burn
In lightnings of fury yet fiercer.
What deeds shall be dared of that soul,
So haughty, when wrong's goads pierce her,
So hard to control ?

110

[*Exeunt* CHILDREN *with* GUARDIAN.

MEDEA (*behind the scenes*)

Woe ! I have suffered, have suffered, foul wrongs that
may waken, may waken
Mighty lamentings full well ! O ye children
accursed from the womb,
Hence to destruction, ye brood of a loathed one for-
saken, forsaken ! [blackness of doom !
Hence with your father, and perish our home in the

NURSE

Ah me, in the father's offences
What part have the babes, that thine hate
Should blast them ?—forlorn innocences,
How sorely I fear for your fate !
How terrible princes' moods are !—
Long ruling, unschooled to obey,—
Unforgiving, unsleeping their feuds are :
Better life's level way.

120

Be it mine, if in greatness I may not,
In quiet and peace to grow old.

293

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τῶν γὰρ μετρίων πρῶτα μὲν εἰπεῖν
τοῦνομα νικᾷ, χρήσθαί τε μακρῷ
λῶστα βροτοῖσιν· τὰ δ' ὑπερβάλλοντ'
οὐδένα καιρὸν δύναται θνητοῖς·
μείζους δ' ἄτας, ὅταν ὀργισθῇ
130 δαίμων, οἴκοις ἀπέδωκεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔκλυον φωνάν, ἔκλυον δὲ βοᾶν
τᾶς δυστάνου
Κολχίδος, οὐδέ πω ἥπιος· ἀλλά, γεραιά,
λέξον· ἐπ' ἀμφιπύλου γὰρ ἔσω μελάθρου γόον
ἔκλυον·
οὐδὲ συνήδομαι, ὦ γύναι, ἄλγεσι δώματος,
ἐπεὶ μοι φίλον κέκρανται.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

οὐκ εἰσὶ δόμοι· φροῦδα τὰδ' ἤδη.
140 τὸν μὲν γὰρ ἔχει λέκτρα τυράννων,
ἢ δ' ἐν θαλάμοις τήκει βιοτὰν
δέσποινα, φίλων οὐδενὸς οὐδὲν
παραθαλπομένη φρένα μύθοις.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

αἰαῖ,
διὰ μου κεφαλᾶς φλόξ οὐρανία
βαίῃ· τί δέ μοι ζῆν ἔτι κέρδος ;
φεῦ φεῦ· θανάτῳ καταλυσαίμαν
βιοτὰν στυγεράν προλιπούσα.
294

MEDEA

Sweeter name than "The Mean" shall ye say not,
And to taste it is sweetness untold.
But to men never weal above measure
Availed : on its perilous height
The Gods in their hour of displeasure
The heavier smite.

130

Enter CHORUS of Corinthian Ladies.

CHORUS

I have hearkened the voice of the daughter of Colchis,
the sound of the crying
Of the misery-stricken ; nor yet is she stilled. Now
the tale of her tell,
Grey woman ; for moaned through the porch from
her chamber the wail of her sighing ;
And I cannot, I cannot be glad while the home in
affliction is lying,
The house I have loved so well.

NURSE

Home?—home there is none : it hath vanished
away :

For my lord to a bride of the princes is thrall ; 140
And my lady is pining the livelong day [say
In her bower, and for naught that her friends' lips
On her heart may the dews of comfort fall.

MEDEA (*behind the scenes*)

Would God that the flame of the lightning from
heaven descending, descending,
Might burn through mine head !—for in living
wherein any more is my gain ?
Alas and alas ! Would God I might bring to an
ending, an ending,
The life that I loathe, and behind me might cast
all its burden of pain !

295

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

- 150 αἶες, ὦ Ζεῦ καὶ γᾶ καὶ φῶς, στρ.
 ἀχὰν οἶαν ἅ δύστανος
 μέλπει νύμφα ;
 τίς σοί ποτε τᾶς ἀπλάτου
 κοίτας ἔρος, ὦ ματαία,
 σπεύσει θανάτου τελευτάν ;
 μηδὲν τόδε λίσσον.
 εἰ δὲ σὸς πόσις
 καινὰ λέχη σεβίζει,
 κείνῳ τόδε μὴ χαράσσου
 Ζεὺς σοι τάδε συνδικήσει. μὴ λίαν
 τάκου δυρομένα σὸν εὐνάταν.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

- 160 ὦ μεγάλα Θέμι καὶ πότνι' Ἄρτεμι,
 λεύσσεθ' ἅ πάσχω, μεγάλοις ὄρκοις
 ἐνδησαμένα τὸν κατάρατον
 πόσιν ; ὅν ποτ' ἐγὼ νύμφαν τ' ἐσίδοιμ'
 αὐτοῖς μελάνθοις διακναιομένους,
 οἷ γ' ἐμὲ πρόσθεν τολμῶς ἄδικεῖν.
 ὦ πάτερ, ὦ πόλις, ὧν ἀπενάσθη
 αἰσχρῶς τὸν ἐμὸν κτείνασα κάσιν.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

- 170 κλύεθ' οἷα λέγει κάπιβοᾶται
 Θέμιν εὐκταίαν Ζήνᾳ θ', ὃς ὄρκων
 θνητοῖς ταμίας νενόμισται ;

MEDEA

CHORUS

O Zeus, Earth, Light, did ye hear her, (Str.)
How waileth the woe-laden breath
Of the bride in unhappiest plight?
What yearning for vanished delight, 150
O passion-distraught, should have might
To cause thee to wish death nearer—
The ending of all things, death?
Make thou not for this supplication!
If thine husband hath turned and adored
New love, [that estranged he is,]
O harrow thy soul not for this:
It is Zeus that shall right thee, I wis.
Ah, pine not in over-vexation
Of spirit, bewailing thy lord!

MEDEA (*behind the scenes*)

O Lady of Justice, O Artemis' Majesty, see it, O see 160
it— [lasting who tied
Look on the wrongs that I suffer, by oaths ever-
The soul of mine husband, that ne'er from the curse
he might free it, nor free it
From your vengeance! O may I behold him at
last, even him and his bride,
Them, and these halls therewithal, all shattered in
ruin, in ruin!— [despite!
Wretches, who dare unprovoked to do to Medea
O father, O city, whom erst I forsook, for undoing,
undoing,
And for shame, when the blood of my brother I
spilt on the path of my flight!

NURSE

Do ye hear what she saith, and uplifteth her cry
Unto Themis and Zeus, to the Suppliant's King,
Oath-steward of men that be born but to die? 170

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὐκ ἔστιν ὅπως ἔν τινι μικρῷ
δέσποινα χόλον καταπαύσει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς ἂν ἐς ὄψιν τὰν ἀμετέραν
ἔλθοι μύθων τ' αὐδαθέντων
δέξαιτ' ὁμφάν,
εἴ πως βαρύθυμον ὄργαν
καὶ λῆμα φρενῶν μεθείη.
μήτοι τό γ' ἐμὸν πρόθυμον
φίλοισιν ἀπέστω.

180

ἀλλὰ βᾶσά νιν
δεῦρο πόρευσον οἴκων
ἔξω, φίλα καὶ τάδ' αὖδα·
σπεῦσον πρὶν τι κακῶσαι τοὺς εἴσω·
πένθος γὰρ μεγάλως τόδ' ὀρμᾶται.

ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

δράσω τάδ'· ἀτὰρ φόβος εἰ πείσω
δέσποιναν ἐμήν·
μόχθου δὲ χάριν τήνδ' ἐπιδώσω.
καίτοι τοκάδος δέργμα λεαίνης
ἀποταυροῦται δμωσίν, ὅταν τις
μῦθον προφέρων πέλας ὀρμηθῇ.

190

σκαιοὺς δὲ λέγων κοῦδέν τι σοφοὺς
τοὺς πρόσθε βροτοὺς οὐκ ἂν ἀμάρτοις,
οἷτινες ὕμνους ἐπὶ μὲν θαλίαις
ἐπὶ τ' εἰλαπίναις καὶ παρὰ δείπνοις
ἤϋροντο βίου τερπνὰς ἀκοάς·

MEDEA

O my lady will lay not her anger by
Soon, making her vengeance a little thing.

CHORUS

(*Ant.*)
If she would but come forth where we wait her,
If she would but give ear to the sound
Of our speech, that her spirit would learn
From its fierceness of anger to turn,
And her lust for revenge not burn !
O ne'er may my love prove traitor,
Never false to my friends be it found !

But go thou, and forth of the dwelling . 180
Thy mistress hitherward lead :
Say to her that friends be we all.
O hasten, ere mischief befall
The lords of the palace-hall ;
For her grief, like a tempest upswelling,
Resistless shall ruin-ward speed.

NURSE

I will do it : but almost my spirit despaireth
To win her : yet labour of love shall it be.
But my queen on her thralls as a mad bull glareth,
Or a lioness couched mid her whelps, whoso dareth
With speech to draw near her, so tameless is she.

He should err not, who named the old singers in
singing 190
Not cunning, but left-handed bards, for their lays
Did they frame for the mirth-tide, the festal in-
bringing
Of the wine, and the feast, when the harp-strings are
ringing
To sweeten with melody life's sweet days.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

στυγίους δὲ βροτῶν οὐδεὶς λύπας
 ἤϋρετο μούσῃ καὶ πολυχόρδοις
 ᾠδαῖς παύειν, ἐξ ὧν θάνατοι
 δειναί τε τύχαι σφάλλουσι δόμους.

200

καίτοι τάδε μὲν κέρδος ἀκείσθαι
 μολπαῖσι βροτούς· ἵνα δ' εὐδειπνοὶ
 δαῖτες, τί μάτην τείνουσι βοήν;
 τὸ παρὸν γὰρ ἔχει τέρψιν ἀφ' αὐτοῦ
 δαιτὸς πλήρωμα βροτοῖσιν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

210

ἰαχὰν αἶον πολύστονον γόων,
 λιγυρὰ δ' ἄχεα μογερὰ βοᾷ
 τὸν ἐν λέχει προδόταν κακόννυμφον
 θεοκλυτεῖ δ' ἄδικα παθοῦσα
 τὰν Ζανὸς ὀρκίαν Θέμιν,
 ἃ νιν ἔβασεν
 Ἑλλάδ' ἐς ἀντίπορον
 δι' ἄλα νύχιον ἐφ' ἄλμυρὰν
 πόντου κλῆδ' ἀπέραντον.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

220

Κορίνθιαι γυναῖκες, ἐξῆλθον δόμων,
 μή μοι τι μέμψησθ'· οἶδα γὰρ πολλοὺς βροτῶν
 σεμνοὺς γεγῶτας, τοὺς μὲν ὀμμάτων ἄπο,
 τοὺς δ' ἐν θυραίοις· οἱ δ' ἀφ' ἡσύχου ποδὸς
 δύσκειαν ἐκτήσαντο καὶ ῥαθυμίαν.
 δίκη γὰρ οὐκ ἔνεστιν ὀφθαλμοῖς βροτῶν,
 ὅστις πρὶν ἀνδρὸς σπλάγχχον ἐκμαθεῖν σαφῶς
 στυγεῖ δεδορκώς, οὐδὲν ἡδικημένος.

300

MEDEA

But the dread doom of mortals, the anguish heart-
rending—

Never minstrel by music hath breathed on them [peace,
Nor by song with his harp-notes in harmony blending ;
Albeit thereof cometh death's dark ending

Unto many a home that is wrecked by these.

And yet were it surely a boon to bring healing

Of sorrow to mortals with song ; but in vain 200

Mid the fulness of feasting ring voices clear-pealing,

And the banquet itself hath a glamour, concealing

From mortals their doom, flinging spells over pain.

[*Exit* NURSE.

CHORUS

I have heard it, the sigh-laden cry of the daughter

Of Colchis, the woe-shrilling anguish of wailing

For the traitor to love who with false vows caught
her

[assailing

Who in strength of her wrongs chideth Heaven,

The Oath-queen of Zeus, who with cords all-pre-
vailing

[water,

Forth haled her, and brought her o'er star-litten 210

Where the brine-mists hover o'er Pontus' Key,

Unto Hellas far over the boundless sea.

Enter MEDEA.

MEDEA

Corinthian dames, I have come forth my doors

Lest ye condemn me. Many I know are held

Mis-proud—some, since they shrink from public gaze ;

Some, from their bearing to their fellow-men ;

Some quiet lives for indolence are defamed ;

For justice dwells not in the eyes of man,

Who, ere he hath discerned his neighbour's heart, 220

Hates him at sight, albeit nowise wronged.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

- χρή δὲ ξένον μὲν κάρτα προσχωρεῖν πόλει·
 οὐδ' ἀστὸν ἦνεσ' ὅστις αὐθάδης γεγώς
 πικρὸς πολίταις ἐστὶν ἀμαθίας ὕπο.
 ἐμοὶ δ' ἄελπτον πρᾶγμα προσπεσὼν τόδε
 ψυχὴν διέφθαρκ'· οἴχομαι δὲ καὶ βίου
 χάριν μεθεῖσα κατθανεῖν χρήζω, φίλαι.
 ἐν ᾧ γὰρ ἦν μοι πάντα γινώσκειν καλῶς,
 230 κακίστος ἀνδρῶν ἐκβέβηχ' οὐμὸς πόσις.
 • πάντων δ' ὅσ' ἔστ' ἔμφυχα καὶ γνώμην ἔχει
 γυναικὲς ἐσμεν ἀθλιώτατον φυτὸν·
 ἅς πρῶτα μὲν δεῖ χρημάτων ὑπερβολῇ
 πόσιν πρίασθαι δεσπότην τε σώματος
 λαβεῖν· κακοῦ γὰρ τοῦτό γ' ἄλγιον κακόν·
 κἂν τῷδ' ἀγὼν μέγιστος, ἢ κακὸν λαβεῖν
 ἢ χρηστόν. οὐ γὰρ εὐκλεεῖς ἀπαλλαγαὶ
 γυναιξίν, οὐδ' οἷόν τ' ἀνήνασθαι πόσιν.
 εἰς καινὰ δ' ἦθη καὶ νόμους ἀφινγμένην
 240 δεῖ μάντιν εἶναι, μὴ μαθοῦσαν οἰκοθεν,
 ὅτῳ μάλιστα χρήσεται συνευνέτῃ.
 κἂν μὲν τάδ' ἡμῖν ἐκπονουμέναισιν εὖ
 πόσις ξυνοικῇ μὴ βία φέρων ζυγόν,
 ζηλωτὸς αἰών· εἰ δὲ μὴ, θανεῖν χρεών.
 ἀνὴρ δ', ὅταν τοῖς ἔνδον ἄχθεται ξυνών,
 ἔξω μολὼν ἔπαυσε καρδίαν ἄσης,
 ἢ πρὸς φίλον τιν' ἢ πρὸς ἥλικα τραπεῖς·
 ἡμῖν δ' ἀνάγκη πρὸς μίαν ψυχὴν βλέπειν.
 λέγουσι δ' ἡμᾶς ὡς ἀκίνδυνον βίον
 250 ζῶμεν κατ' οἴκους, οἱ δὲ μάρνανται δορί·
 κακῶς φρονοῦντες· ὡς τρεῖς ἂν παρ' ἀσπίδα
 στήναι θέλοιμ' ἂν μᾶλλον ἢ τεκεῖν ἄπαξ.

MEDEA

A stranger must conform to the city's wont ;
Nor citizens uncondemned may flout their fellows,
Like mannerless churls, a law unto themselves.

But me—the blow ye wot of suddenly fell
Soul-shattering. 'Tis my ruin : I have lost
All grace of life : I long to die, O friends.
He, to know whom well was mine all in all,
My lord, of all men basest hath become !
Surely, of creatures that have life and wit, • 230
We women are of all unhappiest,
Who, first, must buy, as buys the highest bidder,
A husband—nay, we do but win for our lives
A master ! Deeper depth of wrong is this.
Here too is dire risk—will the lord we gain
Be evil or good ? Divorce ?—'tis infamy
To us : we may not even reject a suitor !¹

Then, coming to new customs, habits new,
One need be a seer, to know the thing unlearned
At home, what manner of man her mate shall be. 240
And *if* we learn our lesson, *if* our lord
Dwell with us, plunging not against the yoke,
Happy our lot is ; else—no help but death.
For the man, when the home-yoke galls his neck,
Goes forth, to ease a weary sickened heart
By turning to some friend, some kindred soul :
We to one heart alone can look for comfort.

But we, say they, live an unperilled life
At home, while they do battle with the spear—
Unreasoning fools ! Thrice would I under shield 250
Stand, rather than bear childbirth-peril once.

¹ A Greek girl's husband was chosen for her by her parents.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ αὐτὸς πρὸς σέ καμ' ἦκει λόγος·
 σοὶ μὲν πόλις γὰρ ἔστι καὶ πατὴρ δόμοι
 βίου τ' ὄνησις καὶ φίλων συνουσία,
 ἐγὼ δ' ἔρημος ἄπολις οὐσ' ὑβρίζομαι
 πρὸς ἀνδρός, ἐκ γῆς βαρβάρου λελησμένη,
 οὐ μητέρ', οὐκ ἀδελφόν, οὐχὶ συγγενῇ
 μεθορμίσασθαι τῆσδ' ἔχουσα συμφορᾶς.
 260 τοσοῦτον οὖν σου τυγχάνειν βουλήσομαι,
 ἣν μοι πόρος τις μηχανή τ' ἐξευρεθῇ
 πόσιν δίκην τῶνδ' ἀντιτίσασθαι κακῶν
 [τὸν δόντα τ' αὐτῷ θυγατέρ' ἢ τ' ἐγῆματο],
 σιγᾶν. γυνὴ γὰρ τᾶλλα μὲν φόβου πλέα,
 κακὴ δ' ἐς ἀλκὴν καὶ σίδηρον εἰσορᾶν.
 ὅταν δ' ἐς εὐνὴν ἡδικομένη κυρῇ,
 οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλη φρὴν μαιφονωτέρα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

270 δράσω τάδ'· ἐνδίκως γὰρ ἐκτίσει πόσιν,
 Μήδεια. πενθεῖν δ' οὐ σε θαυμάζω τύχας.
 ὁρῶ δὲ καὶ Κρέοντα τῆσδ' ἄνακτα γῆς
 στείχοντα, καινῶν ἄγγελον βουλευμάτων.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

σὲ τὴν σκυθρωπὸν καὶ πόσει θυμουμένην,
 Μήδειαν, εἶπον τῆσδε γῆς ἔξω περᾶν
 φυγάδα, λαβοῦσαν δισσὰ σὺν σαυτῇ τέκνα,
 καὶ μή τι μέλλειν· ὥς ἐγὼ βραβεὺς λόγου
 τοῦδ' εἰμί, κοῦκ ἄπειμι πρὸς δόμους πάλιν,
 πρὶν ἂν σε γαίης τερμόνων ἔξω βάλω.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

αἰαί· πανώλης ἢ τάλαιν' ἀπόλλυμαι.
 ἐχθροὶ γὰρ ἐξιᾶσι πάντα διὴ κάλων,
 κοῦκ ἔστιν ἄτης εὐπρόσοιστος ἔκβασις.

MEDEA

But ah, thy story is not one with mine !
Thine is this city, thine a father's home,
Thine bliss of life and fellowship of friends ;
But I, lone, cityless, and outraged thus
Of him who kidnapped me from foreign shores,
Mother nor brother have I, kinsman none,
For port of refuge from calamity.
Wherefore I fain would win of thee this boon :—
If any path be found me, or device, 260
Whereby to avenge these wrongs upon mine husband,
On her who weds, on him who gives the bride,
Keep silence. Woman quails at every peril,
Faint-heart to face the fray and look on steel ;
But when in wedlock-rights she suffers wrong,
No spirit more bloodthirsty shall be found.

CHORUS

This will I ; for 'tis just that thou, Medea,
Requite thy lord : no marvel thou dost grieve.
But I see Creon, ruler of this land,
Advancing, herald of some new decree. 270
Enter CREON.

CREON

Black-lowering woman, wroth against thy lord,
Medea, forth this land I bid thee fare
An exile, taking thy two sons with thee ;
And make no tarrying : daysman of this cause
Am I, and homeward go I not again
Ere from the land's bounds I have cast thee forth.

MEDEA

Ah me ! undone am I in utter ruin !
My foes crowd sail pursuing : landing-place
Is none from surges of calamity.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

280 ἐρήσομαι δὲ καὶ κακῶς πάσχουσ' ὅμως,
 τίνος μ' ἕκατι γῆς ἀποστέλλεις, Κρέον ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

δέδοικά σ', οὐδὲν δεῖ παραμπέχειν λόγους,
 μή μοί τι δράσης παῖδ' ἀνήκεστον κακόν.
 συμβάλλεται δὲ πολλὰ τοῦδε δείματος·
 σοφὴ πέφυκας καὶ κακῶν πολλῶν ἴδρις,
 λυπεῖ δὲ λέκτρων ἀνδρὸς ἐστερημένη.
 κλύω δ' ἀπειλεῖν σ', ὥς ἀπαγγέλλουσί μοι,
 τὸν δόντα καὶ γήμαντα καὶ γαμουμένην
 δράσειν τι. ταῦτ' οὖν πρὶν παθεῖν φυλάξομαι.
 290 κρεῖσσον δέ μοι νῦν πρὸς σ' ἀπεχθέσθαι, γύναι,
 ἢ μαλθακισθένθ' ὕστερον μεταστένειν.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

φεῦ φεῦ·
 οὐ νῦν με πρῶτον, ἀλλὰ πολλάκις, Κρέον,
 ἔβλαψε δόξα μεγάλα τ' εἵργασται κακά.
 χρὴ δ' οὐποθ' ὅστις ἀρτίφρων πέφυκ' ἀνὴρ
 παῖδας περισσῶς ἐκδιδάσκεσθαι σοφούς·
 χωρὶς γὰρ ἄλλης ἧς ἔχουσιν ἀργίας
 φθόνον πρὸς ἀστῶν ἀλφάνουσι· δυσμενῇ.
 σκαιοῖσι μὲν γὰρ καινὰ προσφέρων σοφὰ
 δόξεις ἀχρεῖος κοῦ σοφὸς πεφυκέναι·
 300 τῶν δ' αὖ δοκούντων εἶδέναι τι ποικίλον
 κρεῖσσων νομισθεὶς λυπρὸς ἐν πόλει φανεῖ.
 ἐγὼ δὲ καὐτῇ τῇσδε κοινωνῶ τύχης.
 σοφὴ γὰρ οὐσα, τοῖς μὲν εἰμ' ἐπίφθονος,
 τοῖς δ' ἡσυχαία, τοῖς δὲ θατέρου τρόπου,
 τοῖς δ' αὖ προσάντης· εἰμὶ δ' οὐκ ἄγαν σοφή.
 σὺ δ' αὖ φοβεῖ με· μή τι πλημμελὲς πάθης ;
 οὐχ ὧδ' ἔχει μοι—μὴ τρέσης ἡμᾶς, Κρέον—
 ὥστ' εἰς τυράννους ἄνδρας ἔξαμαρτάνειν.

MEDEA

Yet, howso wronged, one question will I ask— 280
For what cause, Creon, dost thou banish me ?

CREON

I fear thee—need is none to cloak my words—
Lest thou wreak cureless vengeance on my child.
And to this dread do many things conspire :
Wise art thou, cunning in much evil lore ;
Chafed art thou, of thine husband's couch bereft :
I hear thou threatenest, so they bring me word,
To wreak on sire, on bridegroom, and on bride
Mischief. I guard mine head ere falls the blow.
Better be hated, woman, now of thee, 290
Than once relent, and sorely groan too late.

MEDEA

Not now first, Creon,—many a time ere now
Rumour hath wronged and wrought me grievous
harm.
Ne'er should the man whose heart is sound of
wit
Let teach his sons more wisdom than the herd.
They are burdened with unprofitable lore,
And spite and envy of other folk they earn.
For, if thou bring strange wisdom unto dullards,
Useless shalt thou be counted, and not wise :
And, if thy fame outshine those heretofore 300
Held wise, thou shalt be odious in men's eyes.
Myself too in this fortune am partaker.
Of some my wisdom wins me jealousy,
Some count me spiritless ; outlandish some ;
Unsocial some. Yet no deep lore is mine.
And thou, thou fear'st me, lest I work thee
harm.

Not such am I—O Creon, dread not me—
That against princes I should dare transgress.

307
x 2

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

310 τί γὰρ σύ μ' ἠδίκηκας ; ἐξέδου κόρην
 ὅτ' σε θυμὸς ἤγεν. ἀλλ' ἐμὸν πόσιν
 μισῶ· σὺ δ', οἶμαι, σωφρονῶν ἔδρας τάδε.
 καὶ νῦν τὸ μὲν σὸν οὐ φθονῶ καλῶς ἔχειν.
 νυμφεύετ', εὖ πράσσοιτε· τήνδε δὲ χθόνα
 ἑᾶτέ μ' οἰκεῖν· καὶ γὰρ ἠδικοῦμενοι
 σιγησόμεσθα, κρεισσόνων νικῶμενοι.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

λέγεις ἀκοῦσαι μαλθάκ', ἀλλ' εἴσω φρενῶν
 ὀρρωδία μοι μὴ τι βουλευῆς κακόν,
 320 τόσῳ δέ γ' ἤσσουν ἢ πάρος πέποιθά σοι·
 γυνή γὰρ ὀξύθυμος, ὥς δ' αὐτῶς ἀνὴρ,
 ῥάων φυλάσσειν ἢ σιωπηλὸς σοφός.
 ἀλλ' ἔξιθ' ὥς τάχιστα, μὴ λόγους λέγε·
 ὥς ταῦτ' ἄραρε, κοῦκ ἔχεις τέχνην ὅπως
 μενεῖς παρ' ἡμῖν οὔσα δυσμενῆς ἐμοί.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

μή, πρὸς σε γονάτων τῆς τε νεογάμου κόρης.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

λόγους ἀναλοῖς· οὐ γὰρ ἂν πείσαις ποτέ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἀλλ' ἐξελᾶς με κοῦδὲν αἰδέσει λιτάς ;

ΚΡΕΩΝ

φιλῶ γὰρ οὐ σὲ μᾶλλον ἢ δόμους ἐμούς.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὦ πατρίς, ὥς σου κάρτα νῦν μνείαν ἔχω.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

πλὴν γὰρ τέκνων ἔμοιγε φίλτατον πόλις.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

330 φεῦ φεῦ, βροτοῖς ἔρωτες ὥς κακὸν μέγα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὅπως ἂν, οἶμαι, καὶ παραστῶσιν τύχαι.

MEDEA

How hast thou wronged me? Thou hast given thy
child

To whomso pleased thee. But—I hate mine husband ; 310
So, doubtless, this in prudence hast thou done.

Nay, but I grudge not thy prosperity.

Wed ye, and prosper. But in this your land
Still let me dwell : for I, how wronged soe'er,
Will hold my peace, o'ermastered by the strong.

CREON

Soft words to hear !—but in thine inmost heart,
I fear, thou plottest mischief all the while ;
And all the less I trust thee than before.

The vehement-hearted woman—yea, or man—

Is easier watched-for than the silent-cunning. 320

Nay, forth with all speed : plead me pleadings none ;

For this is stablished : no device hast thou

To bide with us, who art a foe to me.

MEDEA (*clasping his feet*)

Nay,—by thy knees, and by the bride, thy child !

CREON

Thou wastest words ; thou never shalt prevail.

MEDEA

Wilt drive me forth, respecting naught my prayers ?

CREON

Ay : more I love not thee than mine own house.

MEDEA

My country ! O, I call thee now to mind !

CREON

Ay, next my children, dear to me is Corinth.

MEDEA

Alas ! to mortals what a curse is love !

330

CREON

Blessing or curse, I trow, as fortune falls.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

Ζεῦ, μὴ λάθοι σε τῶνδ' ὃς αἷτιος κακῶν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ἔρπ', ὦ ματαία, καὶ μ' ἀπάλλαξον πόνων.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

πονοῦμεν ἡμεῖς κοῦ πόνων κεχρήμεθα.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τάχ' ἐξ ὀπαδῶν χειρὸς ὠσθήσει βία.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

μὴ δῆτα τοῦτό γ', ἀλλὰ σ' αἰτοῦμαι, Κρέον—

ΚΡΕΩΝ

ὄχλον παρέξεις, ὥς ἔοικας, ὦ γύναι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

φευξόμεθ'· οὐ τοῦθ' ἰκέτευσα σοῦ τυχεῖν.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

τί δ' αὖ βιάζει κοῦκ ἀπαλλάσσει χθονός;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

340

μίαν με μείναι τήνδ' ἔασον ἡμέραν
καὶ ξυμπερᾶναι φροντίδ' ἧ φευξόμεθα,
παισὶν τ' ἀφορμὴν τοῖς ἐμοῖς, ἐπεὶ πατὴρ
οὐδὲν προτιμᾷ μηχανήσασθαι τέκνοις.
οἴκτειρε δ' αὐτούς· καὶ σύ· τοι παίδων πατὴρ
πέφυκας· εἰκὸς δ' ἐστὶν εὐνοϊάν σ' ἔχειν.
τούμου γὰρ οὐ μοι φροντίς, εἰ φευξόμεθα,
κείνους δὲ κλαίω συμφορᾷ κεχρημένους.

ΚΡΕΩΝ

350

ἦκιστα τοῦμὸν λῆμ' ἔφυ τυραννικόν,
αἰδούμενος δὲ πολλὰ δὴ διέφθορα·
καὶ νῦν ὀρώ μὲν ἐξαμαρτάνων, γύναι,
ὅμως δὲ τεύξει τοῦδε· προὔννεπώ δέ σοι,
εἰ σ' ἡ ἑπιούσα λαμπρὰς ὄψεται θεοῦ
καὶ παῖδας ἐντὸς τῆσδε τερμόνων χθονός,

310

MEDEA

MEDEA

Zeus, Zeus, forget not him who is cause of this !

CREON

Hence, passionate fool, and rid me of my trouble.

MEDEA

Troubled am I ; new troubles need I none.

CREON

Soon shalt thou be by servants' hands thrust out.

MEDEA

Nay—nay—not this, O Creon, I implore !

CREON

So, woman, thou, it seems, wilt make a coil.

MEDEA

I will flee forth :—not this the boon I crave.

CREON

Why restive then ?—why rid not Corinth of thee ?

MEDEA

Suffer me yet to tarry this one day,
And somewhat for our exile to take thought,
And find my babes a refuge, since their sire
Cares naught to make provision for his sons.
Compassionate these—a father too art thou
Of children—meet it is thou show them grace.
Not for myself I fret, if I be banished :
For them in their calamity I mourn.

340

CREON

My spirit least of all is tyrannous.
Many a plan have my relentings marred :
And, woman, now I know I err herein,
Yet shalt thou win this boon. But I forewarn thee,
If thee the approaching Sun-god's torch behold
Within this country's confines with thy sons,

350

311

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

θανεῖ. λέλεκται μῦθος ἀψευδῆς ὄδε.
 νῦν δ', εἰ μένειν δεῖ, μίμν' ἐφ' ἡμέραν μίαν·
 οὐ γάρ τι δράσεις δεινὸν ὧν φόβος μ' ἔχει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δύστανε γύναι,
 φεῦ φεῦ, μελέα τῶν σῶν ἀχέων.
 ποῖ ποτε τρέψει ; τίνα προξενίαν
 360 ἢ δόμον ἢ χθόνα σωτήρα κακῶν
 ἐξευρήσεις ;
 ὥς εἰς ἄπορόν σε κλύδωνα θεός,
 Μήδεια, κακῶν ἐπόρευσε.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

κακῶς πέπρακται πανταχῇ· τίς ἀντερεῖ ;
 ἀλλ' οὔτι ταύτη ταῦτα, μὴ δοκεῖτέ πω.
 ἔτ' εἴς' ἀγῶνες τοῖς νεωστὶ νυμφίοις,
 καὶ τοῖσι κηδεύσασιν οὐ σμικροὶ πόνοι.
 δοκεῖς γὰρ ἂν με τόνδε θωπεύσαι ποτε,
 370 εἰ μὴ τι κερδαίνουσιν ἢ τεχνωμένην ;
 οὐδ' ἂν προσεῖπον οὐδ' ἂν ἠψάμην χεροῖν.
 ὁ δ' εἰς τοσοῦτον μωρίας ἀφίκετο,
 ὥστ' ἐξὸν αὐτῷ τᾶμ' ἐλεῖν βουλευμάτα
 γῆς ἐκβαλόντι, τήνδ' ἀφήκεν ἡμέραν
 μείναι μ', ἐν ἣ τρεῖς τῶν ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν νεκροὺς
 θήσω, πατέρα τε καὶ κόρην πόσιν τ' ἐμόν.
 πολλὰς δ' ἔχουσα θανασίμους αὐτοῖς ὁδοὺς,
 οὐκ οἶδ' ὁποῖα πρῶτον ἐγχειρῶ, φίλαι,
 πότερον ὑφάψω δῶμα νυμφικὸν πυρί,
 380 ἢ θηκτὸν ὥσω φάσγανον δι' ἥπατος,
 σιγῇ δόμους εἰσβᾶσ' ἵν' ἔστρωται λέχος.

MEDEA

Thou diest :—the word is said that shall not lie.
Now, if remain thou must, remain one day—
Too short for thee to do the deeds I dread. [Exit.

CHORUS

O hapless thou !
Woe's me for thy misery, woe for the trouble and
anguish that meet thee !
Whitherward wilt thou turn thee ?—what welcoming
hand mid the strangers shall greet thee ?
What home or what land to receive thee, deliver-
ance from evils to give thee, 360
Wilt thou find for thee now ?
How mid surge of despair to o'erwhelm thee in ruin
God's hand on thine helm
Hath steered, O Medea, thy prow !

MEDEA

Wronged—wronged by God and man ! Who shall
gainsay ?
But is it mere despair ?—deem not so yet.
Bridegroom and bride grim wrestlings yet await ;
Nor troubles light abide these marriage-makers.
Dost think that I had cringed to yon man ever,
Except to gain some gain, or work some wile ?
Nor word nor touch of hand had I vouchsafed him ! 370
But to such height of folly hath he come,
That, when he might forestall mine every plot
By banishment, this day of grace he grants me
To stay, wherein three foes will I lay dead,
The father, and the daughter, and mine husband.
And, having for them many paths of death,
Which first to take in hand I know not, friends—
To fire yon palace midst their marriage-feast,
Or to steal softly to their bridal-bower, [knife.
And through their two hearts thrust the whetted 380

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἀλλ' ἔν τί μοι πρόσαντες· εἰ ληφθήσομαι
δόμους ὑπερβαίνουσα καὶ τεχνωμένη,
θανοῦσα θήσω τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἐχθροῖς γέλων.

κράτιστα τὴν εὐθεΐαν, ἧ πεφύκαμεν
σοφαὶ μάλιστα, φαρμάκοις αὐτοὺς ἐλεῖν.
εἶεν·

καὶ δὴ τεθνᾶσι· τίς με δέξεται πόλις ;
τίς γῆν ἄσυλον καὶ δόμους ἐχεγγύους
ξένος παρασχὼν ῥύσεται τοῦμὸν δέμας ;
οὐκ ἔστι. μείνας' οὖν ἔτι σμικρὸν χρόνον,
390 ἦν μὲν τις ἡμῖν πύργος ἀσφαλῆς φανῇ,
δόλω μέτειμι τόνδε καὶ συγῇ φόνον·
ἦν δ' ἐξελαύνη ξυμφορὰ μ' ἀμήχανος,
αὐτὴ ξίφος λαβοῦσα, κεῖ μέλλω θανεῖν,
κτενῶ σφε, τόλμης δ' εἰμι πρὸς τὸ καρτερόν.

οὐ γὰρ μὰ τὴν δέσποιναν ἦν ἐγὼ σέβω
μάλιστα πάντων καὶ ξυνεργὸν εἰδόμην,
Ἐκάτην μυχοῖς ναίουσαν ἐστίας ἐμῆς,
χαίρων τις αὐτῶν τοῦμὸν ἀλγυνεὶ κέαρ.
πικροὺς δ' ἐγὼ σφιν καὶ λυγροὺς θήσω γάμους,
400 πικρὸν δὲ κῆδος καὶ φυγὰς ἐμὰς χθονός.

ἀλλ' εἰα· φείδου μηδὲν ὧν ἐπίστασαι,
Μήδεια, βουλεύουσα καὶ τεχνωμένη·
ἔρπ' εἰς τὸ δεινόν· νῦν ἀγὼν εὐψυχίας.
ὁρᾷς ἂ πάσχεις ; οὐ γέλωτα δεῖ σ' ὀφλεῖν
τοῖς Σισυφείοις τοῖς τ' Ἰάσονος γάμοις,
γεγῶσαν ἐσθλοῦ πατρὸς Ἥλιου τ' ἄπο.
ἐπίστασαι δέ· πρὸς δὲ καὶ πεφύκαμεν
γυναῖκες, εἰς μὲν ἔσθλ' ἀμηχανώταται,
κακῶν δὲ πάντων τέκτονες σοφώταται.

MEDEA

Yet one thing bars the way—if I be found
Crossing the threshold of the house and plotting,
Die shall I mid the mocking laughter of foes.

Best the sure path, wherein my nature's cunning
Excels, by poisons to destroy them—yea.
Now, grant them dead: what city will receive
me,

What host vouchsafe a land of refuge, home
Secure, and from the avenger shield my life?
There is none. Tarrying then a little space,
If any tower of safety shall appear, 390
These deaths by guile and silence will I compass;
But if misfortune drive me desperate forth,
Myself will grip the sword,—yea, though I die,—
Aud slay, and dare the strong hand's reckless
deed.

Ah, by the Queen of Night, whom I revere
Above all, and for fellow-worker chose,
Hecate, dweller by mine hearth's dark shrine,
None, none shall vex my soul, and rue it not.
Bitter and woeful bridal will I give them,
Bitter troth-plight and banishing of me. 400

Up then!—spare naught of all thy sorcery-lore,
Medea, of thy plotting and contriving;
On to the dread deed! Now is need of daring.
Look on thy wrongs: thou must not make derision
For sons of Sisyphus, for Jason's bride,—
Thou, sprung from royal father, from the Sun!
Thou know'st the means. I prove me woman
indeed!

Men say we are most helpless for all good,
But of dark deeds most cunning fashioners.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

- 410 ἄνω ποταμῶν ἱερῶν χωροῦσι παγαί, στρ. α'
καὶ δίκαια καὶ πάντα πάλιν στρέφεται.
ἀνδράσι μὲν δόλιαι βουλαί, θεῶν δ'
οὐκέτι πίστις ἄραρε.
τὰν δ' ἐμὰν εὐκλειαν ἔχειν βιοτὰν
στρέψουσι φᾶμαι·
ἔρχεται τιμὰ γυναικείῃ γενέει·
420 οὐκέτι δυσκέλαδος φάμα γυναίκας ἔξει.

ἀντ. α'

- μοῦσαι δὲ παλαιγενέων λήξουσ' ἀοιδᾶν
τὰν ἐμὰν ὑμνεῦσαι ἀπιστοσύναν.
οὐ γὰρ ἐν ἀμετέρᾳ γνώμᾳ λύρας
ᾧπασε θέσπιν ἀοιδᾶν
Φοῖβος, ἀγήτωρ μελέων· ἐπεὶ ἀντ-
άχῃσ' ἂν ὕμνον
ἀρσένων γέννα· μακρὸς δ' αἰὼν ἔχει
430 πολλὰ μὲν ἀμετέραν ἀνδρῶν τε μοῖραν εἰπεῖν.

στρ. β'

σὺ δ' ἐκ μὲν οἴκων πατρίων ἔπλευσας
μαινομένα κραδίᾳ, διδύμας ὀρίσασα πόντον
πέτρας· ἐπὶ δὲ ξένα
ναίεις χθονί, τᾷς ἀνάνδρου
κοίτας ὀλέσασα λέκτρον,
τάλαινα, φυγὰς δὲ χώρας
ἄτιμος ἐλαύνει.

MEDEA

CHORUS

(*Str. 1.*)

Upward and back to their fountains the sacred rivers
are stealing ; [confusion :
Justice is turned to injustice, the order of old to 410
The thoughts of the hearts of men are treachery
wholly, and, reeling [become a delusion.
From its ancient foundations, the faith of the Gods is
Everywhere change !—even me men's voices hence-
forth shall honour ;

My life shall be sunlit with glory ; for woman the
old-time story [be upon her.
Is ended, the slanders hoary no more shall as chains

(*Ant. 1*)

And the strains of the singers of old generations for
shame shall falter, [faithlessness ever. 420
Which sang evermore of the treason of woman, her
Alas, that our lips are not touched with the fire of
song from the altar

Of Phoebus, the Harper-king, of the inspiration-
giver ! [ringing
Else had I lifted my voice in challenge of song high-
Unto men : for the roll of the ages shall find for
the poet-sages [their singing.

Proud woman-themes for their pages, heroines worthy
(*Str. 2*)

But thou from the ancient home didst sail over
leagues of foam, [sawest dispart, 430
On-spied by a frenzied heart, and the sea-gates
The Twin Rocks. Now, in the land
Of the stranger, thy doom is to waken
To a widowed couch, and forsaken
Of thy lord, and woe-overtaken,
To be cast forth shamed and banned.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

440 βέβακε δ' ὄρκων χάρις, οὐδ' ἔτ' αἰδῶς ἀντ. β'
Ἑλλάδι τᾷ μεγάλα μένει, αἰθερία δ' ἀνέπτα.
σοὶ δ' οὔτε πατρὸς δόμοι,
δύστανε, μεθορμίσασθαι
μόχθων πάρα, σῶν τε λέκτρων
ἄλλα βασιλεια κρείσσω
δόμοισιν ἐπέστα.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

οὐ νῦν κατεῖδον πρῶτον, ἀλλὰ πολλάκις,
τραχεῖαν ὀργὴν ὡς ἀμήχανον κακόν.
σοὶ γὰρ παρὸν γὰν τήνδε καὶ δόμους ἔχειν
450 κούφως φερούση κρεισσόνων βουλευματα,
λόγων ματαίων εἶνεκ' ἐκπεσεῖ χθονός.
κάμοι μὲν οὐδὲν πρᾶγμα· μὴ παύσῃ ποτὲ
λέγουσ' Ἰάσων ὡς κάκιστός ἐστ' ἀνὴρ·
ἂ δ' εἰς τυράννους ἐστί σοι λελεγμένα,
πᾶν κέρδος ἡγοῦ ζημιουμένη φυγῇ.
καγὼ μὲν αἰεὶ βασιλέων θυμουμένων
ὀργὰς ἀφήρουν καὶ σ' ἐβουλόμην μένειν·
σὺ δ' οὐκ ἀνίεις μωρίας, λέγουσ' αἰεὶ
κακῶς τυράννους· τοιγὰρ ἐκπεσεῖ χθονός.
ὅμως δὲ κάκ τῶνδ' οὐκ ἀπειρηκῶς φίλοις
460 ἦκω, τὸ σὸν δὲ προσκοπούμενος, γύναι,
ὡς μήτ' ἀχρήμων σὺν τέκνοισιν ἐκπέσῃς
μήτ' ἐνδεής του· πόλλ' ἐφέλκεται φυγῇ
κακὰ ξὺν αὐτῇ. καὶ γὰρ εἰ σύ με στυγεῖς,
οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην σοὶ κακῶς φρονεῖν ποτε.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὦ παγκάκιστε, τοῦτο γάρ σ' εἰπεῖν ἔχω
γλώσση μέγιστον εἰς ἀνανδρίαν κακόν,
ἦλθες πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ἦλθες ἔχθιστος γεγώς

MEDEA

(*Ant.* 2)

Disannulled is the spell of the oath : no shame for
the broken troth [flight hath it ta'en.
In Hellas the wide doth remain, but heavenward its
 No home of a father hast thou 440
 For thine haven when trouble-storms lower.
 Usurped is thy bridal bower
 Of another, in pride of her power,
 Ill-starred, overqueening thee now.

Enter JASON.

JASON

Not now first, nay, but oft-times have I marked
What desperate mischief is a froward spirit.
Thou mightest stay in Corinth, in these halls,
Bearing unfractionously thy rulers' pleasure,
Yet for wild whirling words banished thou art. 450
Me they vex not—cease never, an thou wilt,
Clamouring, "Jason is of men most base!"
But, for thy railing on thy rulers, count it
All gain, that only exile punisheth thee.
For me—I have striven long to appease the wrath
Of kings incensed : fain would I thou shouldst stay.
But thou rein'st not thy folly, speaking still
Evil of dignities ; art therefore banished.
Yet, for all this, not wearied of my friends,
With so much forethought come I for thee, lady, 460
That, banished with thy babes, thou lack not gold,
Nor aught beside ; for exile brings with it
Hardships full many. Though thou hatest me,
Never can I bear malice against thee.

MEDEA

Caitiff of caitiffs !—blackest of reproaches
My tongue for thine unmanliness can frame—
Com'st thou to me—dost come, most hateful proved

[θεοῖς τε καὶ μοῖ παντί τ' ἀνθρώπων γένοι ;]
 οὗτοι θράσος τόδ' ἐστὶν οὐδ' εὐτολμία,
 470 φίλους κακῶς δράσαντ' ἐναντίον βλέπειν,
 ἀλλ' ἡ μεγίστη τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις νόσων
 πασῶν, ἀναίδει· εὐ δ' ἐποίησας μολῶν,
 ἐγὼ τε γὰρ λέξασα κουφισθήσομαι
 ψυχὴν κακῶς σε, καὶ σὺ λυπήσει κλύων.
 ἐκ τῶν δὲ πρώτων πρῶτον ἄρξομαι λέγειν.
 ἐσωσά σ', ὡς ἴσασιν Ἑλλήνων ὅσοι
 ταῦτόν συνεισέβησαν Ἀργῶν σκάφος,
 πεμφθέντα ταύρων πυρπνύων ἐπιστάτην
 480 ζεύγλαισι καὶ σπεροῦντα θανάσιμον γύνῃ·
 δράκοντά θ', ὃς πάγχρυσον ἀμπέχων δέρας
 σπείραις ἔσφζε πολυπλόκοις ἄπνους ὦν,
 κτείνας' ἀνέσχον σοὶ φάος σωτήριον.
 αὐτὴ δὲ πατέρα καὶ δόμους προδοῦσ' ἐμοὺς
 τὴν Πηλιῶτιν εἰς Ἴωλκὸν ἰκόμην
 σὺν σοί, πρόθυμος μᾶλλον ἢ σοφωτέρα·
 Πελῖαν τ' ἀπέκτειν', ὥσπερ ἁλγιστον θανεῖν,
 παίδων ὑπ' αὐτοῦ, πάντα δ' ἐξείλον δόμον.¹
 καὶ ταῦθ' ὑφ' ἡμῶν, ὃ κάκιστ' ἀνδρῶν, παθῶν
 προὔδωκας ἡμᾶς, καινὰ δ' ἐκτήσω λέχη,
 490 παίδων γεγῶτων· εἰ γὰρ ἦσθ' ἄπαις ἔτι,
 συγγνωστὸν ἦν σοι τοῦδ' ἐρασθῆναι λέχους.
 ὄρκων δὲ φρούδη πίστις, οὐδ' ἔχω μαθεῖν
 εἰ θεοὺς νομίζεις τοὺς τότε οὐκ ἄρχειν ἔτι,
 ἢ καινὰ κεῖσθαι θέσμι' ἀνθρώποις τὰ νῦν,
 ἐπεὶ σύννοισθά γ' εἰς ἔμ' οὐκ εὖορκος ὦν.
 φεῦ δεξιὰ χεὶρ ἧς σὺ πόλλ' ἐλαμβάνου,
 καὶ τῶνδε γονάτων, ὡς μάτην κεχρῶσμεθα

¹ Some MSS. have φόβον, "I cast cut all thy (or their) fear."

MEDEA

To heaven, to me, to all the race of men ?
 This is not daring, no, nor courage this,
 To wrong thy friends, and blench not from their eyes, 470
 But, of all plagues infecting men, the worst,
 Even shamelessness. And yet 'tis well thou cam'st,
 For I shall ease the burden of mine heart
 Reviling thee, and thou be galled to hear.
 And with the first things first will I begin.
 I saved thee : this knows every son of Greece
 That stepped with thee aboard thine Argo's hull,
 Thee, sent to quell the flame-outbreathing bulls
 With yoke-bands, and to sow the tilth of death.
 The dragon, warder of the Fleece of Gold, 480
 That sleepless kept it with his manifold coils,
 I slew, and raised deliverance-light for thee.
 Myself forsook my father and mine home,
 And to Iolcos under Pelion came
 With thee, more zealous in thy cause than wise.
 Pelias I slew by his own children's hands—
 Of all deaths worst,—and dashed their house to ruin.
 Thus dealt with, basest of all men, by me,
 For a new bride hast thou forsaken me,
 Though I had borne thee children ! Wert thou 490
 childless,
 Not past forgiving were this marriage-craving.
 But faith of oaths hath vanished. I know not
 Whether thou deem'st the olden Gods yet rule,
 Or that new laws are now ordained for men ;
 For thine heart speaks thee unto me forsworn.
 Out on this right hand, which thou oft wouldst
 clasp,—
 These knees !—I was polluted by the touch

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

- κακοῦ πρὸς ἀνδρός, ἐλπίδων δ' ἡμάρτομεν.
 ἄγ', ὥς φίλῳ γὰρ ὄντι σοι κοινώσομαι,
 500 δοκοῦσα μὲν τί πρὸς γε σοῦ πράξειν καλῶς;
 ὅμως δ' ἐρωτηθεὶς γὰρ αἰσχύων φανεῖ.
 νῦν ποῖ τράπωμαι; πότερα πρὸς πατρὸς δόμους,
 οὓς σοὶ προδοῦσα καὶ πάτραν ἀφικόμην;
 ἢ πρὸς ταλαίνας Πελιάδας; καλῶς γ' ἂν οὖν
 δέξαιντό μ' οἴκοις ὧν πατέρα κατέκτανον.
 ἔχει γὰρ οὕτω· τοῖς μὲν οἴκοθεν φίλοις
 ἐχθρὰ καθέστηχ', οὓς δέ μ' οὐκ ἐχρῆν κακῶς
 δρᾶν, σοὶ χάριν φέρουσα πολεμίους ἔχω.
 τοιγάρ με πολλαῖς μακαρίαν Ἑλληνίδων
 510 ἔθηκας ἀντὶ τῶνδε· θαυμαστὸν δέ σε
 ἔχω πόσιν καὶ πιστὸν ἢ τάλαιν' ἐγώ,
 εἰ φεύξομαί γε γαῖαν ἐκβεβλημένη,
 φίλων ἔρημος, σὺν τέκνοις μόνη μόνοις·
 καλόν γ' ὄνειδος τῷ νεωστὶ νυμφίῳ,
 πτωχοὺς ἀλᾶσθαι παῖδας ἢ τ' ἔσωσά σε.
 ὦ Ζεῦ, τί δὴ χρυσοῦ μὲν ὅς κίβδηλος ἦ
 τεκμήρι' ἀνθρώποισιν ὥπασας σαφῆ,
 ἀνδρῶν δ' ὅτῳ χρὴ τὸν κακὸν διειδέναι,
 οὐδεὶς χαρακτήρ ἐμπέφυκε σώματι;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

- 520 δεινὴ τις ὀργὴ καὶ δυσίατος πέλει,
 ὅταν φίλοι φίλοισι συμβάλωσ' ἔριν.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

δεῖ μ', ὥς ἔοικε, μὴ κακὸν φῦναι λέγειν,
 ἀλλ' ὥστε ναὸς κεδνὸν οἶακοστρόφον
 ἄκροισι λαίφους κρασπέδοις ὑπεκδραμεῖν
 τὴν σὴν στόμαργον, ὦ γύναι, γλωσσαλγίαν.
 ἐγὼ δ', ἐπεὶ σὴν καὶ λῖαν πυργοῖς χάριν,
 Κύπριν νομίζω τῆς ἐμῆς ναυκληρίας

MEDEA

Of a base man, thus frustrate of mine hopes !
Come, as a friend will I commune with thee—
Yet what fair dealing should I hope from thee ?— 500
Yet will I : questioned, baser shalt thou show.
Now, whither turn I ?—to my father's house,
My land ?—which I betrayed, to flee with thee !
To Pelias' hapless daughters ? Graciously
Their father's slayer would they welcome home !
For thus it is—a foe am I become
To mine own house : no quarrel I had with those
With whom I have now a death-feud for thy
sake.

For all this hast thou made me passing-blest
Midst Hellas' daughters ! Oh, in thee have I— 510
O wretched I !—a wondrous spouse and leal,
Since from the land cast forth I pass to exile
Forlorn of friends, alone with children lone.
A proud reproach for our new bridegroom this—
“ In poverty his babes, his saviour, wander ! ”
O Zeus, ah wherefore hast thou given to men
Plain signs for gold which is but counterfeit,
But no assay-mark nature-graven shows
On man's form, to discern the base withal ?

CHORUS

Awful and past all healing is that wrath 520
When they that once loved clash in feud of hate.

JASON

Needs must I be not ill at speech, meseems,
But, like the careful helmsman of a ship,
With close-reefed canvas run before the gale,
Woman, of thy tempestuous-railing tongue.
I—for thy kindness tower-high thou pilest—
Deem Cypris saviour of my voyaging,

- σώτειραν εἶναι θεῶν τε κἀνθρώπων μόνην.
 σοὶ δ' ἔστι μὲν νοῦς λεπτός—ἀλλ' ἐπίφθονος
 530 λόγος διελθεῖν, ὡς Ἑρως σ' ἠνάγκασε
 τόξοις ἀφύκτοις τοῦμόν ἐκσῶσαι δέμας.
 ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀκριβῶς αὐτὸ θήσομαι λίαν·
 ὅπη γὰρ οὖν ὤνησας, οὐ κακῶς ἔχει.
 μείζω γε μέντοι τῆς ἐμῆς σωτηρίας
 εἵληφας ἢ δέδωκας, ὡς ἐγὼ φράσω.
 πρῶτον μὲν Ἑλλάδ' ἀντὶ βαρβάρου χθονὸς
 γαῖαν κατοικεῖς καὶ δίκην ἐπίστασαι
 νόμοις τε χρῆσθαι μὴ πρὸς ἰσχύος χάριν·
 540 πάντες δέ σ' ἤσθοντ' οὔσαν Ἑλληνες σοφὴν,
 καὶ δόξαν ἔσχες· εἰ δὲ γῆς ἐπ' ἔσχατοις
 ὄροισιν ᾤκεις, οὐκ ἂν ἦν λόγος σέθεν.
 εἴη δ' ἔμοιγε μήτε χρυσὸς ἐν δόμοις
 μήτ' Ὀρφέως κάλλιον ὑμνῆσαι μέλος,
 εἰ μὴ πίσημος ἢ τύχη γένοιτό μοι.
 τοσαῦτα μὲν σοι τῶν ἐμῶν πόνων πέρι
 ἔλεξ'. ἄμιλλαν γὰρ σὺ προὔθηκας λόγων.
 ἂ δ' εἰς γάμους μοι βασιλικούς ὠνείδισας,
 ἐν τῷδε δείξω πρῶτα μὲν σοφὸς γεγώς,
 550 ἔπειτα σώφρων, εἴτα σοὶ μέγας φίλος
 καὶ παισὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖσιν· ἀλλ' ἔχ' ἥσυχος.
 ἐπεὶ μετέστην δεῦρ' Ἰωλκίας χθονὸς
 πολλὰς ἐφέλκων συμφορὰς ἀμηχάνους,
 τί τοῦδ' ἂν εὔρημ' ἠῦρον εὐτυχέστερον
 ἢ παῖδα γῆμαι βασιλέως φυγὰς γεγώς;
 οὐχ, ἣ σὺ κνίζεις, σὸν μὲν ἐχθαίρων λέχος,
 καινῆς δὲ νύμφης ἰμέρῳ πεπληγμένος,
 οὐδ' εἰς ἄμιλλαν πολύτεκνον σπουδὴν ἔχων·
 ἄλῃς γὰρ οἱ γεγῶτες οὐδὲ μέμφομαι·
 ἀλλ' ὥς, τὸ μὲν μέγιστον, οἰκοῖμεν καλῶς

MEDEA

Her, and none other or of Gods or men.
Thou art subtle of wit—nay, but ungenerous
It were to tell how Love, by strong compulsion 530
Of shafts unerring, made thee save my life.
Yet take I not account too strict thereof ;
For, in that thou didst save me, thou didst well.
Howbeit, more hast thou received than given
From my deliverance, as my words shall prove :—
First, then, in Hellas dwell'st thou, in the stead
Of land barbaric, knowest justice, learnest
To live by law without respect of force ;
And all the Greeks have heard thy wisdom's fame.
Renown is thine ; but if on earth's far bourn 540
Thou dwelledst yet, thou hadst not lived in story.
Now mine be neither gold mine halls within,
Nor sweeter song be mine than Orpheus sang,
If my fair fortune be to fame unknown.

Thus far of my great labours have I spoken,—
This challenge to debate didst thou fling down :—
But, for thy railings on my royal marriage,
Herein will I show, first, that wise I was ;
Then, temperate ; third, to thee the best of
friends
And to my children—nay, but hear me out. 550

When I came hither from Iolcos-land
With many a desperate fortune in my train,
What happier treasure-trove could I have found
Than to wed—I, an exile—with a princess ?
Not—where it galls thee—loathing couch of thine,
And for a new bride smitten with desire,
Nor eager I to multiply mine offspring :—
Suffice these born to me : no fault in them :
But that—this chiefly—we might live in honour,

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

560 καὶ μὴ σπανιζοίμεσθα, γιγνώσκων ὅτι
 πένητα φεύγει πᾶς τις ἐκποδὼν φίλος,
 παῖδας δὲ θρέψαιμ' ἀξίως δόμων ἐμῶν,
 σπείρας τ' ἀδελφούς τοῖσιν ἐκ σέθεν τέκνοις,
 εἰς ταὐτὸ θείην, καὶ ξυναρτήσας γένος,
 εὐδαιμονοίην. σοί τε γὰρ παίδων τί δεῖ,
 ἐμοί τε λύει τοῖσι μέλλουσιν τέκνοις
 τὰ ζῶντ' ὀνῆσαι. μὼν βεβούλευμαι κακῶς;
 οὐδ' ἂν σὺ φαίης, εἴ σε μὴ κνίζοι λέχος.

570 ἀλλ' εἰς τοσοῦτον ἤκεθ' ὥστ' ὀρθομένης
 εὐνῆς γυναῖκες πάντ' ἔχειν νομίζετε,
 ἦν δ' αὖ γένηται ξυμφορά τις εἰς λέχος,
 τὰ λῶστα καὶ κάλλιστα πολεμιώτατα
 τίθεσθε. χρῆν ἄρ' ἄλλοθὲν ποθεν βροτούς
 παῖδας τεκνοῦσθαι, θῆλυ δ' οὐκ εἶναι γένος·
 χοῦτως ἂν οὐκ ἦν οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις κακόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ἰᾶσον, εὖ μὲν τούσδ' ἐκόσμησας λόγους·
 ὅμως δ' ἔμοιγε, κεῖ παρὰ γνώμην ἐρῶ,
 δοκεῖς προδοὺς σὴν ἄλοχον οὐ δίκαια δρᾶν.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

580 ἦ πολλὰ πολλοῖς εἰμι διάφορος βροτῶν.
 ἐμοὶ γὰρ ὅστις ἄδικος ὢν σοφὸς λέγειν
 πέφυκε, πλείστην ζημίαν ὀφλισκάνει·
 γλώσση γὰρ αὐχῶν τ' ἄδικ' εὖ περιστελεῖν,
 τολμᾷ πανουργεῖν· ἔστι δ' οὐκ ἄγαν σοφός.

ὥς καὶ σὺ μὴ νυν εἰς ἔμ' εὐσχήμεων γένῃ
 λέγειν τε δεινός· ἐν γὰρ ἐκτενεῖ σ' ἔπος.
 χρῆν σ', εἴπερ ἦσθα μὴ κακός, πείσαντά με
 γαμεῖν γάμον τόνδ', ἀλλὰ μὴ σιγῇ φίλων.

MEDEA

And be not straitened,—for I know full well 560
How all friends from the poor man stand aloof,—
And I might nurture as beseems mine house
Our sons, and to these born of thee beget
Brethren, and, knitting in one family all,
Live happy days. Thou, what wouldst thou or
children?

But me it profits, through sons to be born
To help the living. Have I planned so ill?
Not thou wouldst say it, save for jealousy's sting.

But ye—ye women—so unreasoning are
That, wedlock-rights untrespasped-on, all's well ; 570
But, if once your sole tenure be infringed,
With the best, fairest lot are ye at feud
Most bitter. Would that mortals otherwise
Could get them babes, that womankind were not,
And so no curse had lighted upon men.

CHORUS

Words, Jason, words, tricked out full cunningly!
Yet to me—though I speak not to thy mind—
Unjust thou seem'st, betraying thus thy wife.

MEDEA

Not as the world thinks think I oftentimes ;
Nay, to my thought, a villain's artful tongue 580
Doubles the hurt his villainy doth to him :
So sure his tongue can gloze the wrong, he grows
Reckless in sin—a mere fool's wisdom this.

Then be not thou, as touching me, fair-seeming
And crafty-tongued: one word shall overthrow thee :
Thou shouldst, wert thou not base, have wed this
bride
With my consent, not hid it from thy friends.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΙΑΣΩΝ

590 καλῶς γ' ἄν, οἶμαι, τῷδ' ὑπηρετεῖς λόγῳ,
εἴ σοι γάμον κατέειπον, ἥτις οὐδὲ νῦν
τολμᾷς μεθεῖναι καρδίας μέγαν χόλον·

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὐ τοῦτό σ' εἶχεν, ἀλλὰ βάρβαρον λέχος
πρὸς γῆρας οὐκ εὐδοξον ἐξέβαινέ σοι.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

εὐ νυν τόδ' ἴσθι, μὴ γυναικὸς εἵνεκα
γῆμαί με λέκτρα βασιλέων ἂ νῦν ἔχω,
ἀλλ', ὥσπερ εἶπον καὶ πάρος, σῶσαι θέλων
σέ, καὶ τέκνοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς ὁμοσπόρους
φύσαι τυράννους παῖδας, ἔρυμα δώμασι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

μή μοι γένοιτο λυπρὸς εὐδαίμων βίος
μηδ' ὄλβος ὅστις τήν ἐμὴν κνίζοι φρένα.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

600 οἶσθ' ὥς μετεύξει καὶ σοφωτέρα φανεῖ;
τὰ χρηστὰ μή σοι λυπρὰ φαιnéσθω ποτε,
μηδ' εὐτυχοῦσα δυστυχῆς εἶναι δόκει.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὑβριζ', ἐπειδὴ σοὶ μὲν ἔστ' ἀποστροφή,
ἐγὼ δ' ἔρημος τήνδε φευξοῦμαι χθόνα.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

αὐτὴ τάδ' εἶλον· μηδέν' ἄλλον αἰτιῶ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τί δρῶσα; μὼν γαμοῦσα καὶ προδοῦσά σε;

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ἀρὰς τυράννοις ἀνοσίους ἀρωμένη.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

καὶ σοῖς ἀραία γ' οὔσα τυγχάνω δόμοις.

MEDEA

JASON

Ay, this my purpose nobly hadst thou helped,
Had I a marriage named, who even now
Canst not refrain thy heart's exceeding wrath ! 590

MEDEA

Not this thine hindrance, but the alien wife
No crown of honour was as eld drew on.

JASON

Now know this well—not for the woman's sake
I wed the royal bride whom I have won,
But, as I said, of my desire to save
Thee, and beget seed royal, to my sons
Brethren, and for mine house a tower of strength.

MEDEA

No prosperous life 'neath sorrow's cloud for me,
Nor weal, with thorns aye rankling in mine heart !

JASON

Know'st how to change thy prayer, and wiser
show ? 600
May thy good never seem to thee thy grief ;
Nor in fair fortune deem thy lot misfortune.

MEDEA

O yea, insult ! Thou hast a refuge, thou ;
But desolate I am banished from this land.

JASON

Thyself hast chosen this : blame none beside.

MEDEA

I ?—sooth, by wedding and betraying thee !

JASON

By cursing princes with an impious curse.

MEDEA

Ay—and to *thine* house hast thou found me a curse !

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΙΑΣΩΝ

610 ὥς οὐ κρινοῦμαι τῶνδέ σοι τὰ πλείονα.
 ἀλλ' εἴ τι βούλει παισὶν ἢ σαυτῆς φυγῇ
 προσωφέλημα χρημάτων ἐμῶν λαβεῖν,
 λέγ'· ὥς ἔτοιμος ἀφθόνῳ δοῦναι χερὶ
 ξένοις τε πέμπειν σύμβολ', οἱ δράσουσί σ' εὖ.
 καὶ ταῦτα μὴ θέλουσα μωρανεῖς, γύναι·
 λήξασα δ' ὀργῆς κερδανεῖς ἀμείνονα.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὔτ' ἂν ξένοισι τοῖσι σοῖς χρησαίμεθ' ἄν,
 οὔτ' ἂν τι δεξαίμεσθα, μήθ' ἡμῖν δίδου·
 κακοῦ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς δῶρ' ὄνησιν οὐκ ἔχει.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

620 ἀλλ' οὖν ἐγὼ μὲν δαίμονας μαρτύρομαι,
 ὥς πάνθ' ὑπουργεῖν σοί τε καὶ τέκνοις θέλω·
 σοὶ δ' οὐκ ἀρέσκει τὰγάθ', ἀλλ' αὐθαδία
 φίλους ἀπωθεῖ· τοιγὰρ ἀλγυνεὶ πλέον·

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

χώρει· πόθῳ γὰρ τῆς νεοδμήτου κόρης
 αἰρεῖ χρονίζων δωμάτων ἐξώπιος·
 νύμφευ· ἴσως γάρ, σὺν θεῷ δ' εἰρήσεται,
 γαμεῖς τοιοῦτον ὥστε σ' ἀρνεῖσθαι γάμον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔρωτες ὑπὲρ μὲν ἄγαν στρ. α'
 ἐλθόντες οὐκ εὐδοξίαν
 οὐδ' ἀρετὰν παρέδωκαν
 630 ἀνδράσιν· εἰ δ' ἄλις ἔλθοι
 Κύπρις, οὐκ ἄλλα θεὸς εὐχαρις οὕτως.
 μήποτ', ὦ δέσποιν', ἐπ' ἐμοὶ
 χρυσέων τόξων ἐφείης
 ἰμέρῳ χρίσας' ἄφυκτον οἰστόν.

MEDEA

JASON

With thee no more I wrangle touching this.
But if, or for the children or thyself, 610
For help in exile thou wilt take my gold,
Speak : ready am I to give with hand ungrudging,
And send guest-tokens which shall find thee friends.
If this thou wilt not, foolish shalt thou be :
Refrain wrath, and advantaged shalt thou be.

MEDEA

Thy friends!—nothing will I of friends of thine.
No whit will I receive, nor offer thou.
No profit is there in a villain's gifts.

JASON

In any wise I call the Gods to witness
That all help would I give thee and thy sons ; 620
But thy good likes thee not : thy stubborn pride
Spurns friends : the more thy grief shall therefore be.
[*Exit.*]

MEDEA

Away!—impatience for the bride new-trapped
Consumes thee loitering from her bower afar!
Wed : for perchance—and God shall speed the
word—
Thine shall be bridal thou wouldst fain renounce.

CHORUS

Love bringeth nor honour nor profit to men when it
cometh restraining [Str. 1] [raining]
Not its unscanted excess : but if Cypris, in measure 630
Her joy, cometh down, there is none other
Goddess so winsome as she.
Not upon me, O Queen, do thou aim from thy bow
all-golden [—not on me !]
The arrow desire-envenomed that none may avoid

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἀντ. α'
 στέγοι¹ δέ με σωφροσύνα,
 δῶρημα κάλλιστον θεῶν·
 μηδέ ποτ' ἀμφιλόγους ὀρ-
 γὰς ἀκόρεστά τε νείκη
 θυμὸν ἐκπλήξας' ἑτέροις ἐπὶ λέκτροις
 640 προσβάλοι δεινὰ Κύπρις, ἀ-
 πτολέμους δ' εὐνὰς σεβίζουσ'
 ὀξύφρων κρίνοι λέχη γυναικῶν.

στρ. β'
 ὦ πατρίς, ὦ δώματα, μὴ
 δῆτ' ἀπολις γενοίμαν
 τὸν ἀμηχανίας ἔχουσα
 δυσπέρατον αἰῶν,
 οἰκτροτάτων ἀχέων.
 θανάτῳ θανάτῳ πάρος δαμείην
 650 ἀμέραν τάνδ' ἐξανύσασα· μό-
 χθων δ' οὐκ ἄλλος ὑπερθεῖν ἦ
 γὰς πατρίας στέρεσθαι.

ἀντ. β'
 εἶδομεν, οὐκ ἐξ ἑτέρων
 μῦθον ἔχω φράσασθαι·
 σὲ γὰρ οὐ πόλις, οὐ φίλων τις
 ᾧκτισεν παθοῦσαν
 δεινότατον παθέων.
 660 ἀχάριστος ὅλοιθ' ὅτῳ πάρεστι
 μὴ φίλους τιμᾶν καθαρὰν ἀνοί-
 ξαντα κλῆδα φρενῶν· ἐμοὶ
 μὲν φίλος οὔ ποτ' ἔσται.

ΑΙΓΕΤΣ

Μήδεια, χαῖρε· τοῦδε γὰρ προοίμιον
 κάλλιον οὐδεὶς οἶδε προσφωνεῖν φίλους.

¹ Wecklein : for MSS. στέργοι, "befriend me."

MEDEA

(*Ant.* 1)

But let Temperance shield me, the fairest of gifts of
the Gods ever-living : [unforgiving,
Nor ever with passion of jarring contention, nor feuds
In her terrors may Love's Queen visit me, smiting
with maddened unrest
For a couch mismated my soul ; but the peace of the
bride-bed be holden [bonds that be best. 640
In honour of her, and her keen eyes choose for us
(*Str.* 2)

O fatherland, O mine home,
Not mine be the exile's doom !
Into poverty's pathways hard to be trod may my feet
not be guided !
Most piteous anguish were this.
By death—O by death ere then may the conflict of
life be decided, [land divided—
Ended be life's little day ! To be thus from the home- 650
No pang more bitter there is.

(*Ant.* 2)

We have seen, and it needeth naught
That of others herein we be taught :
For thee not a city, for thee not a friend hath
compassionated
When affliction most awful is thine.
But he, who regardeth not friends, accursed may he
perish, and hated, [hapless-fated— 660
Who opes not his heart with sincerity's key to the
Never such shall be friend of mine.

Enter AEGEUS.

AEGEUS

Medea, joy to thee !—for fairer greeting
None knoweth to accost his friends withal.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὦ χαῖρε καὶ σύ, παῖ σοφοῦ Πανδίωνος,
Αἰγέυ. πόθεν γῆς τῆσδ' ἐπιστρωφᾷ πέδον ;

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

Φοίβου παλαιὸν ἐκλιπὼν χρηστήριον.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τί δ' ὀμφαλὸν γῆς θεσπιφδὸν ἐστάλης ;

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

παίδων ἐρευνῶν σπέρμ' ὅπως γένοιτό μοι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

670 πρὸς θεῶν, ἄπαις γὰρ δεῦρ' αἰὲ τείνεις βίον ;

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

ἄπαιδές ἐσμεν δαίμονός τινος τύχη.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

δάμαρτος οὔσης, ἣ λέχους ἄπειρος ὦν ;

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

- οὐκ ἐσμέν εὐνῆς ἄζυγες γαμηλίου.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τί δῆτα Φοῖβος εἶπέ σοι παίδων πέρι ;

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

σοφώτερ' ἢ κατ' ἄνδρα συμβαλεῖν ἔπη.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

θέμις μὲν ἡμᾶς χρησμὸν εἰδέναι θεοῦ ;

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

μάλιστ', ἐπεὶ τοι καὶ σοφῆς δεῖται φρενός.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τί δῆτ' ἔχρησε ; λέξον, εἰ θέμις κλύειν.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

ἄσκού με τὸν προὔχοντα μὴ λῦσαι πόδα,

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

680 πρὶν ἂν τί δράσης ἢ τίν' ἐξίκη χθόνα ;

MEDEA

MEDEA

Joy to thee also, wise Pandion's son,
Aegeus. Whence art thou journeying through this
land?

AEGEUS

Leaving the ancient oracle of Phoebus.

MEDEA

Why didst thou fare to earth's prophetic navel?

AEGEUS

To ask how seed of children might be mine.

MEDEA

'Fore Heaven!—aye childless is thy life till now? 670

AEGEUS

Childless I am, by chance of some God's will.

MEDEA

This, with a wife, or knowing not the couch?

AEGEUS

Nay, not unyoked to wedlock's bed am I.

MEDEA

Now what to thee spake Phoebus touching issue?

AEGEUS

Deep words of wisdom not for man to interpret.

MEDEA

Without sin might I know the God's reply?

AEGEUS

O yea—good sooth, it asks a wise wit most.

MEDEA

What said he? Say, if sin be not to hear.

AEGEUS

“Loose not the wine-skin's forward-jutting foot”—

MEDEA

Till thou shouldst do what thing, or reach what land? 680

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

πρὶν ἂν πατρώαν αὖθις ἐστίαν μόλω.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

σὺ δ' ὥς τί χρήζων τήνδε ναυστολεῖς χθόνα ;

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

Πιτθεύς τις ἔστι γῆς ἄναξ Τροιζηνίας.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

παῖς, ὥς λέγουσι, Πέλοπος εὐσεβέστατος.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

τούτῳ θεοῦ μάντευμα κοινῶσαι θέλω.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

σοφὸς γὰρ ἀνὴρ καὶ τρίβων τὰ τοιάδε.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

καὶ μοί γε πάντων φίλτατος δορυξένων.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἄλλ' εὐτυχοίης καὶ τύχοις ὅσων ἐράς.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

τί γὰρ σὸν ὄμμα χρώς τε συντέτηχ' ὁδε ;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

690 Αἰγεῦ, κάκιστος ἔστι μοι πάντων πόσις.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

τί φῆς ; σαφῶς μοι σὰς φράσον δυσθυμίας.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἀδικεῖ μ' Ἰάσων οὐδὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ παθών.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

τί χρήμα δράσας ; φράζε μοι σαφέστερον.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

γυναῖκ' ἐφ' ἡμῖν δεσπότην δόμων ἔχει.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

ἦ που τετόλμηκ' ἔργον αἰσχιστον τόδε ;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

σάφ' ἴσθ' ἄτιμοι δ' ἐσμέν οἱ πρὸ τοῦ φίλοι.

MEDEA

ÆGEUS

"Till to the hearth ancestral back thou come."

MEDEA

And thou, what wouldst thou sailing to this shore?

ÆGEUS

There is one Pittheus, king of Troezen he,—

MEDEA

A man most pious, Pelops' son, they say.

ÆGEUS

To him the God's response I fain would tell.

MEDEA

Yea—a wise man, who hath much skill therein.

ÆGEUS

Yea, and my best-belovèd spear-ally.

MEDEA

Now prosper thou, and win thine heart's desire.

ÆGEUS

Why droops thine eye?—why this wan-wasted hue?

MEDEA

Ægeus, of all men basest is mine husband.

690

ÆGEUS

What say'st thou? Clearly tell me thine heart's pain.

MEDEA

He wrongs me—Jason, never wronged of me.

ÆGEUS

What hath he done? More plainly tell it out.

MEDEA

Another wife he takes, his household's queen.

ÆGEUS

Ha! hath he dared in truth this basest deed?

MEDEA

Yea: I am now dishonoured, once beloved.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΑΙΓΕΤΣ

πότερον ἐρασθείς, ἢ σὸν ἐχθαίρων λέχος ;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

μέγαν γ' ἔρωτα· πιστὸς οὐκ ἔφυ φίλοις.

ΑΙΓΕΤΣ

ἴτω νυν, εἴπερ ὥς λέγεις ἐστὶν κακός.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

700 ἀνδρῶν τυράννων κῆδος ἡράσθη λαβεῖν.

ΑΙΓΕΤΣ

δίδωσι δ' αὐτῷ τίς ; πέραινέ μοι λόγον.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

Κρέων, ὃς ἄρχει τῆσδε γῆς Κορινθίας.

ΑΙΓΕΤΣ

συγγνωστὰ μὲν τᾶρ' ἦν σε λυπεῖσθαι, γύναι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὄλωλα· καὶ πρὸς γ' ἐξελαύνομαι χθονός.

ΑΙΓΕΤΣ

πρὸς τοῦ ; τόδ' ἄλλο καινὸν αὐ λέγεις κακόν.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

Κρέων μ' ἐλαύνει φυγάδα γῆς Κορινθίας.

ΑΙΓΕΤΣ

εἴᾳ δ' Ἰάσων ; οὐδὲ ταῦτ' ἐπήνεσα.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

λόγῳ μὲν οὐχί, καρτερεῖν δὲ βούλεται.

710 ἄλλ' ἄντομαί σε τῆσδε πρὸς γενειάδος
γονάτων τε τῶν σῶν ἱκεσία τε γίγνομαι,
οἴκτειρον οἴκτειρόν με τὴν δυσδαίμονα,
καὶ μή μ' ἔρημον ἐκπεσοῦσαν εἰσίδης,
δέξαι δὲ χώρα καὶ δόμοις ἐφέστιον.
οὕτως ἔρωσ σοὶ πρὸς θεῶν τελεσφόρος
γένοιτο παίδων, καὐτὸς ὄλβιος θάνοις.

MEDEA

ÆGEUS

Another love was this?—or hate of thee?

MEDEA

Love?—deep and high his love is!—traitor in love!

ÆGEUS

Away with him, if he be base as this!

MEDEA

His love was for affinity with princes.

700

ÆGEUS

Who giveth him his daughter? Tell me all.

MEDEA

Creon, who ruleth this Corinthian land.

ÆGEUS

Sooth, lady, reason was that thou shouldst grieve.

MEDEA

'Tis death to me! Yea, also am I banished.

ÆGEUS

Of whom? A monstrous wrong thou namest now!

MEDEA

Creon from Corinth driveth me an exile.

ÆGEUS

Doth Jason suffer this?—I count it shame!

MEDEA

In pretence, no—yet O, he bears it well!

But I beseech thee, lo, thy beard I touch,—

710

I clasp thy knees, thy suppliant am I now:—

Pity, O pity me the evil-starred,

And see me not cast forth to homelessness:

Receive to a hearth-place in thy land, thine halls.

So by heaven's blessing fruitful be thy love

In children, and in death thyself be blest.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

εὖρημα δ' οὐκ οἶσθ' οἷον ἡῤρηκας τόδε·
παύσω δέ σ' ὄντ' ἄπαιδα καὶ παίδων γονὰς
σπεῖραί σε θήσω· τοιάδ' οἶδα φάρμακα.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

720 πολλῶν ἑκατι τήνδε σοι δοῦναι χάριν,
γύναι, πρόθυμός εἰμι, πρῶτα μὲν θεῶν,
ἔπειτα παίδων ὧν ἐπαγγέλλει γονάς·
εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ δὴ φροῦδός εἰμι πᾶς ἐγώ.
[οὕτω δ' ἔχει μοι· σοῦ μὲν ἐλθούσης χθόνα,
πειράσομαί σου προξενεῖν δίκαιος ὢν.]
τόσον γε μέντοι σοι προσημαίνω, γύναι·
ἐκ τῆσδε μὲν γῆς οὗ σ' ἄγειν βουλήσομαι·
αὐτὴ δ' ἐάνπερ εἰς ἐμοὺς ἔλθῃς δόμους,
μενεῖς ἄσυλος κοῦ σε μὴ μεθῶ τινί.
730 ἐκ τῆσδε δ' αὐτὴ γῆς ἀπαλλάσσου πόδα·
ἀναίτιος γὰρ καὶ ξένοις εἶναι θέλω.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἔσται τάδ'· ἀλλὰ πίστις εἰ γένοιτό μοι
τούτων, ἔχοιμ' ἂν πάντα πρὸς σέθεν καλῶς.

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

μῶν οὐ πέποιθας ; ἦ τί σοι τὸ δυσχερές ;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

πέποιθα· Πελίου δ' ἐχθρός ἐστὶ μοι δόμος
Κρέων τε· τούτοις δ', ὀρκίοισι μὲν ζυγεῖς,
ἄγουσιν οὐ μεθεῖ' ἂν ἐκ γαίης ἐμέ·
λόγοις δὲ συμβάς, καὶ θεῶν ἀνώμοτος,
φίλος γένοι' ἂν κἀπικηρυκεύμασι
740 τάχ'¹ ἂν πίθοιο· τὰμὰ μὲν γὰρ ἀσθενῇ,
τοῖς δ' ὄλβος ἔστι καὶ δόμος τυραννικός·

¹ Wytttenbach : for MSS. οὐκ.

MEDEA

Thou know'st not what good fortune thou hast
found ;
For I will end thy childlessness, will cause
Thy seed to grow to sons ; such charms I know.

ÆGEUS

For many causes am I minded, lady,
This grace to grant thee : for the Gods' sake first ; 720
Then, for thy promise of a seed of sons ;
For herein Ægeus' name is like to die.
But thus it is—if to my land thou come,
I will protect thee all I can : my right
Is this ; but I forewarn thee of one thing—
Not from this land to lead thee I consent ;
But, if thou reachest of thyself mine halls,
Safe shalt thou bide ; to none will I yield thee.
But from this land thou must thyself escape ;
For even to strangers blameless will I be. 730

MEDEA

So be it. Yet, were oath-pledge given for this
To me, then had I all I would of thee.

ÆGEUS

Ha, dost not trust me ?—or at what dost stumble ?

MEDEA

I trust thee ; but my foes are Pelias' house
And Creon. Oath-bound, thou couldst never yield me
To these, when they would drag me from the land.
Hadst thou but promised, to the Gods unpledged,
Thou mightest turn their friend, might'st lightly
yield
To herald-summons. Strengthless is my cause :
Wealth is on their side, and a princely house. 740

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΑΙΓΕΤΣ

πολλὴν ἔλεξας ἐν λόγοις προμηθίαν·
ἀλλ' εἰ δοκεῖ σοι, δρᾶν τάδ' οὐκ ἀφίσταμαι.
ἐμοί τε γὰρ τάδ' ἐστὶν ἀσφαλέστατα,
σκῆψίν τιν' ἐχθροῖς σοῖς ἔχοντα δεικνύναι,
τὸ σὸν τ' ἄραρε μᾶλλον· ἐξηγοῦ θεούς.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὄμνυ πέδον Γῆς πατέρα θ' Ἥλιον πατρός
τοῦμοῦ, θεῶν τε συντιθεῖς ἅπαν γένος.

ΑΙΓΕΤΣ

τί χρῆμα δράσειν ἢ τί μὴ δράσειν ; λέγε.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

750

μήτ' αὐτὸς ἐκ γῆς σῆς ἔμ' ἐκβαλεῖν ποτε,
μήτ' ἄλλος ἦν τις τῶν ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν ἄγειν
χρήζῃ, μεθήσειν ζῶν ἐκουσίῳ τρόπῳ.

ΑΙΓΕΤΣ

ὄμνυμι Γαῖαν Ἥλιον θ' ἄγνόν σε βας¹
θεούς τε πάντας ἐμμενείν ἄ σου κλύω.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἄρκει· τί δ' ὄρκῳ τῷδε μὴ ῥυμένων πάθοις ;

ΑΙΓΕΤΣ

ἂ τοῖσι δυσσεβοῦσι γίνεταί βροτῶν.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

χαίρων πορεύου· πάντα γὰρ καλῶς ἔχει.
κἀγὼ πόλιν σὴν ὡς τάχιστ' ἀφίξομαι,
πράξας' ἂ μέλλω καὶ τυχοῦσ' ἂ βούλομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

760

ἀλλὰ σ' ὁ Μαίης πομπαῖος ἀναξ
πελάσειε δόμοις, ὧν τ' ἐπίνοιαν

¹ Porson : MSS. vary between λαμπρὸν φῶς and φῶς.

MEDEA

AEGEUS

Foresight exceeding, lady, in thy words.
Yet, if this be thy will, I draw not back.
Yea, for myself is this the safest course,
To have a plea to show unto thy foes ;
And firmer stands thy cause. The Oath-gods name.

MEDEA

Swear by Earth's plain, and by my father's father,
The Sun, and join the Gods' whole race thereto.

AEGEUS

That I will do or not do—what? Say on.

MEDEA

Never thyself to cast me forth thy land,
Nor, if a foe of mine would hale me thence, 750
To yield me willingly up, while thou dost live.

AEGEUS

By Earth, the Sun's pure majesty, and all
The Gods, I swear to abide by this thou hast said.

MEDEA

Enough. For broken troth what penalty?

AEGEUS

The worst that scourgeth God-despising men.

MEDEA

Pass on thy way rejoicing : all is well.
I too will come with all speed to thy burg,
When mine intent is wrought, my wish attained.

[*Exit* AEGEUS.]

CHORUS

Now the Scion of Maia, the Wayfarer's King,
Bring thee safe to thine home, and the dream of
thine heart, 760

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

σπεύδεις κατέχων πράξεις, ἐπεὶ
γενναῖος ἀνὴρ,
Αἰγέῦ, παρ' ἐμοὶ δεδόκησαι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὦ Ζεῦ Δίκη τε Ζηνὸς Ἥλιον τε φῶς,
νῦν καλλίνικοι τῶν ἐμῶν ἐχθρῶν, φίλαι,
γενησόμεσθα κεῖς ὁδὸν βεβήκαμεν·
νῦν ἐλπίς ἐχθροὺς τοὺς ἐμούς τίσειν δίκην.
οὗτος γὰρ ἀνὴρ ἢ μάλιστ' ἐκάμνομεν
770 λιμὴν πέφανται τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων·
ἐκ τοῦδ' ἀναψόμεσθα πρυμνήτην κάλων,
μολόντες ἄστυ καὶ πόλισμα Παλλάδος.
ἤδη δὲ πάντα τὰμά σοι βουλευμάτων
λέξω· δέχου δὲ μὴ πρὸς ἡδονὴν λόγους.
πέμψας ἐμῶν τιν' οἰκετῶν Ἰάσονα
εἰς ὄψιν ἐλθεῖν τὴν ἐμὴν αἰτήσομαι·
μολόντι δ' αὐτῷ μαλθακοὺς λέξω λόγους,
ὥς καὶ δοκεῖ μοι ταῦτα, καὶ καλῶς ἔχει·
γάμους τυράννων οὓς προδοὺς ἡμᾶς ἔχει
καὶ ξύμφορ' εἶναι καὶ καλῶς ἐγνωσμένα·
780 παῖδας δὲ μεῖναι τοὺς ἐμούς αἰτήσομαι,
οὐχ ὥς λίπω σφε πολεμίας ἐπὶ χθονὸς
ἐχθροῖσι παῖδας τοὺς ἐμούς καθυβρίσαι,
ἀλλ' ὥς δόλοισι παῖδα βασιλέως κτάνω.
πέμψω γὰρ αὐτοὺς δῶρ' ἔχοντας ἐν χεροῖν,
νύμφη φέροντας, τήνδε μὴ φεύγειν χθόνα,
λεπτὸν τε πέπλον καὶ πλόκον χρυσήλατον·
κᾶνπερ λαβοῦσα κόσμον ἀμφιθῇ χροῖ,
κακῶς ὀλεῖται πᾶς θ' ὃς ἂν θίγῃ κόρης·
790 τοιοῖσδε χρίσω φαρμάκοις δωρήματα.
ἐνταῦθα μὲν δὴ τόνδ' ἀπαλλάσσω λόγον·
ᾧμωξα δ' οἶον ἔργον ἔστ' ἐργαστέον

MEDEA

The sweet visions that wing thy feet, mayst thou
bring
To accomplishment, Aegeus, for now this thing
Hath taught me how noble thou art.

MEDEA

O Zeus, Zeus' daughter Justice, Light of the
Sun!

Over my foes triumphant now, my friends,
Shall we become : our feet are on the path.
Now is there hope of vengeance on my foes.
For this man, there where my chief weakness lay,
Hath for my plots a haven in storm appeared.
To him my bark's stern-hawser make I fast, 770
To Pallas' burg and fortress when I go.
And all my plots to thee will I tell now ;
Nor look I that my words should pleasure thee :—
One of mine household will I send to Jason,
And will entreat him to my sight to come ;
And soft words, when he cometh, will I speak,
Saying, "Thy will is mine," and, "It is well";
Saying, his royal marriage, my betrayal,
Is our advantage, and right well devised.
I will petition that my sons may stay— 780
Not for that I would leave on hostile soil
Children of mine for foes to trample on,
But the king's daughter so by guile to slay.
For I will send them bearing gifts in hand
Unto the bride, that they may not be banished,
A robe fine-spun, a golden diadem.
If she receive and don mine ornaments,
Die shall she wretchedly, and all who touch her ;
With drugs so dread will I anoint my gifts.
Howbeit here I pass this story by, 790
And wail the deed that yet for me remains

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

800 τούντεϋθεν ἡμῖν· τέκνα γὰρ κατακτενῶ
 τὰμ'· οὔτις ἔστιν ὅστις ἐξαιρήσεται·
 δόμον τε πάντα συγχέας' Ἰάσονος
 ἔξειμι γαίης, φιλτάτων παίδων φόνον
 φεύγουσα καὶ τλᾶσ' ἔργον ἀνοσιώτατον.
 οὐ γὰρ γελαᾶσθαι τλητὸν ἐξ ἐχθρῶν, φίλαι.
 ἴτω· τί μοι ζῆν κέρδος; οὔτε μοι πατρίς
 οὔτ' οἶκος ἔστιν οὔτ' ἀποστροφὴ κακῶν.
 810 ἡμάρτανον τόθ' ἡνίκ' ἐξελίμπανον
 δόμους πατρώους, ἀνδρὸς Ἑλληνος λόγοις
 πεισθεῖς, δς ἡμῖν σὺν θεῷ τίσει δίκην.
 οὔτ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ γὰρ παῖδας ὄψεται ποτε
 ζῶντας τὸ λοιπὸν οὔτε τῆς νεοζύγου
 νύμφης τεκνώσει παῖδ', ἐπεὶ κακὴν κακῶς
 θανεῖν σφ' ἀνάγκη τοῖς ἐμοῖσι φαρμάκοις.
 μηδεῖς με φαύλην κασθενὴ νομιζέτω
 μηδ' ἡσυχαίαν, ἀλλὰ θατέρου τρόπου,
 βαρεῖαν ἐχθροῖς καὶ φίλοισιν εὐμενῇ·
 810 τῶν γὰρ τοιούτων εὐκλεέστατος βίος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐπεῖπερ ἡμῖν τόνδ' ἐκοίνωσας λόγον,
 σέ τ' ὠφελεῖν θέλουσα, καὶ νόμοις βροτῶν
 ξυλλαμβάνουσα, δρᾶν σ' ἀπεννέπω τάδε.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλως· σοὶ δὲ συγγνώμη λέγειν
 τάδ' ἐστί, μὴ πᾶσχουσιν ὥς ἐγὼ κακῶς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλὰ κτανεῖν σὼ παῖδε τολμήσεις, γύναι;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὔτω γὰρ ἂν μάλιστα δηχθεῖη πόσις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

σὺ δ' ἂν γένοιό γ' ἀθλιωτάτη γυνή.

MEDEA

To bring to pass ; for I will slay my children,
Yea, mine : no man shall pluck them from mine
hand.

Then, having brought all Jason's house to wrack,
I leave the land, fleeing my dear babes' blood,
And having dared a deed most impious.
For unendurable are mocks of foes.

Let all go : what is life to me ? Nor country
Nor home have I, nor refuge from mine ills.

Then erred I, in the day when I forsook
My father's halls, by yon Greek's words beguiled,
Who with God's help shall render me requital.

800

For never living shall he see henceforth
The sons I bare him, nor shall he beget
A son of his new bride, that wretch foredoomed
In agony to die by drugs of mine.

Let none account me impotent, nor weak,
Nor spiritless !—O nay, in other sort,
Grim to my foes, and kindly to my friends.
Most glorious is the life of such as I.

810

CHORUS

Since thou hast made me partner of this tale,—
Wishing to help thee, and yet championing
The laws of men, I say, do thou not this !

MEDEA

It cannot be but so : yet reason is
That thou say this, who art not wronged as I.

CHORUS

Woman, wilt have the heart to slay thy sons ?

MEDEA

Yea : so mine husband's heart shall most be wrung.

CHORUS

But thou of wives most wretched shouldst become.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

820 ἴτω· περισσοὶ πάντες οὖν μέσφ' λόγοι.
 ἀλλ' εἴα χώρει καὶ κόμιζ' Ἰάσονα·
 εἰς πάντα γὰρ δὴ σοὶ τὰ πιστὰ χρώμεθα.
 λέξης δὲ μηδὲν τῶν ἐμοὶ δεδογμένων,
 εἵπερ φρονεῖς εὖ δεσπόταις γυνή τ' ἔφυσ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ἐρεχθεῖδαι τὸ παλαιὸν ὄλβιοι στρ. α'
 καὶ θεῶν παῖδες μακάρων, ἱερᾶς
 χώρας ἀπορθήτου τ' ἀποφερβόμενοι
 830 κλεινοτάταν σοφίαν, αἰεὶ διὰ λαμπροτάτου
 βαίνοντες ἀβρῶς αἰθέρος, ἔνθα ποθ' ἀγνὰς
 ἐννέα Πιερίδας Μούσας λέγουσι
 ξανθὰν Ἀρμονίαν φυτεῦσαι·

τοῦ καλλινάου τ' ἀπὸ Κηφισοῦ ῥοὰς ἀντ. α'
 τὰν Κύπριν κλήζουσιν ἀφυσσαμέναν
 840 χώραν καταπνεῦσαι μετρίας ἀνέμων αὔρας·
 αἰεὶ δ' ἐπιβαλλομέναν
 χαίταισιν εὐώδη ῥοδέων πλόκον ἀνθέων
 τᾷ σοφίᾳ παρέδρους πέμπειν ἔρωτας,
 παντοίας ἀρετᾶς ξυνεργούς.

πῶς οὖν ἱερῶν ποταμῶν στρ. β'
 ἧ πόλις ἧ φίλων
 πόμπιμός σε χώρα

MEDEA

MEDEA

So be it : wasted are all hindering words.
But ho ! [*enter NURSE*] go thou and Jason bring to
me— 820
Thou whom I use for every deed of trust,
And look thou tell none aught of mine intent,
If thine is loyal service, thou a woman.

[*Exeunt MEDEA and NURSE.*]

CHORUS

O happy the race in the ages olden (*Str. 1*)
Of Erechtheus, the seed of the blest Gods' line,
In a land unravaged, peace-enfolden,
Aye quaffing of Wisdom's glorious wine,
Ever through air clear-shining brightly 830
As on wings uplifted pacing lightly,
Where Harmonia, they tell, of the tresses golden,
Bare the Pierid Muses, the stainless Nine.¹

(*Ant. 1*)

And the streams of Cephissus the lovely-flowing
They tell how the Lady of Cyprus drew,
And in Zephyr-wafts of the winds sweet-blowing
Breathed far over the land their dew.
And she sendeth her Loves which, throned in
glory
By Wisdom, fashion all virtue's story ; 840
And over her hair is she throwing, throwing,
Roses in odorous wreaths aye new.

Re-enter MEDEA. (*Str. 2*)

How then should the hallowed city,
The city of sacred waters,
Which shields with her guardian hand

¹ Another interpretation is equally admitted by the Greek—"Grew, sown by the Muses, the stainless Nine."

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

850 τὰν παιδολέτειραν ἔξει,
τὰν οὐχ ὀσίαν μετ' ἄλλων ;
σκέψαι τεκέων πλαγάν,
σκέψαι φόνον οἶον αἶρει.
μή, πρὸς γονάτων σε πάντως
πάντη σ' ἱκετεύομεν,
τέκνα φονεύσης.

πόθεν θράσος †ἢ φρενὸς ἦ ἀντ. β'
χειρὶ τέκνοις σέθεν
καρδίᾳ τε λήψει,†
δεινὰν προσάγουσα τόλμαν ;
860 πῶς δ' ὄμματα προσβαλοῦσα
τέκνοις ἄδακρυν μοῖραν
σχήσεις φόνου ; οὐ δυνάσει,
παίδων ἱκετῶν πιτνόντων,
τέγξαι χέρα φοινίαν
τλάμονι θυμῷ.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ἦκω κελευσθεῖς· καὶ γὰρ οὔσα δυσμενῆς
οὐ τῶν ἀμάρτοις τοῦδέ γ', ἀλλ' ἀκούσομαι
τί χρήμα βούλει καινὸν ἐξ ἐμοῦ, γύναι.

MEDEA

All friends that would fare through her land,
Receive a murderess banned,
Who had slaughtered her babes without pity,
A pollution amidst of her daughters? 850

In thine heart's thoughts set it before thee—
To murder the fruit of thy womb!
O think what it meaneth to slay
Thy sons—what a deed this day
Thou wouldst do! By thy knees we pray,
By heaven and earth we implore thee,
Deal not to thy babes such a doom!
(*Ant.* 2)

O whence, and O whence wilt thou gain thee
Such desperate hardihood
That for spirit so fiendish shall serve,
That shall strengthen thine heart, that shall
nerve
Thine hand, that it shall not swerve
From the ruthless deed that shall stain thee
With horror of children's blood?

O how, when thine eyes thou art turning 860
On thy little ones, wilt thou refrain
The motherhood in thee, to feel
No upwelling of tears? Canst thou steel
Thy breast when thy children kneel,
To crimson thine hand, with unyearning
Heart for thy darlings slain?

Enter JASON.

JASON

I at thy bidding come: albeit my foe,
This grace thou shalt not miss; but I will hear
What new thing, lady, thou dost wish of me.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

- 870 Ἴασον, αἰτοῦμαί σε τῶν·εἰρημένων
 συγγνώμον' εἶναι· τὰς δ' ἐμὰς ὀργὰς φέρειν
 εἰκός σ', ἐπεὶ νῶν πόλλ' ὑπείργασται φίλα.
 ἐγὼ δ' ἐμαντῇ διὰ λόγων ἀφικόμην,
 κάλοιδόρησα· σχετλία, τί μαίνομαι
 καὶ δυσμεναίνω τοῖσι βουλευούσιν εὖ,
 ἐχθρὰ δὲ γαίας κοιράνοις καθίσταμαι
 πόσει θ', ὃς ἡμῖν δρᾷ τὰ συμφορώτατα,
 γήμας τύραννον καὶ κασιγνήτους τέκνοις
 ἐμοῖς φυτεύων ; οὐκ ἀπαλλαχθήσομαι
 θυμοῦ ; τί πάσχω, θεῶν ποριζόντων καλῶς ;
 880 οὐκ εἰσὶ μὲν μοι παῖδες, οἶδα δὲ χθόνα
 φεύγοντας ἡμᾶς καὶ σπανίζοντας φίλων ;
 ταυτ' ἐννοήσας ἡσθόμην ἄβουλίαν
 πολλὴν ἔχουσα καὶ μάτην θυμουμένη.
 νῦν οὖν ἐπαινῶ· σωφρονεῖν τέ μοι δοκεῖς
 κῆδος τόδ' ἡμῖν προσλαβών, ἐγὼ δ' ἄφρων,
 ἧ χρὴν μετεῖναι τῶνδε τῶν βουλευμάτων
 καὶ ξυμπεραίνειν καὶ παρεστάναι λέχει
 νύμφην τε κηδεύουσιν ἡδεσθαι σέθεν.
 ἀλλ' ἐσμὲν οἷόν ἐσμεν, οὐκ ἐρῶ κακόν,
 890 γυναῖκες· οὐκουν χρὴν σ' ὁμοιοῦσθαι κακοῖς
 οὐδ' ἀντιτείνειν νήπι' ἀντὶ νηπίων.
 παριέμεσθα, καὶ φαμεν κακῶς φρονεῖν
 τότ', ἀλλ' ἄμεινον νῦν βεβούλευμαι τόδε.
 ὦ τέκνα τέκνα, δεῦτε, λείπετε στέγας,
 ἐξέλθετ', ἀσπάσασθε καὶ προσείπατε
 πατέρα μεθ' ἡμῶν, καὶ διαλλάχθηθ' ἅμα
 τῆς πρόσθεν ἐχθρας εἰς φίλους μητρὸς μέτα·
 σπονδαὶ γὰρ ἡμῖν καὶ μεθέστηκεν χόλος.
 λάβεσθε χειρὸς δεξιᾶς· οἴμοι κακῶν.

MEDEA

MEDEA

Jason, I ask thee to forgive the words
Late-spoken. Well thou mayest gently bear 870
With my wild mood, for all the old love's sake.
Now have I called myself to account, and railed
Upon myself—"Wretch, wherefore am I mad?
And wherefore rage against good counsellors,
And am at feud with rulers of the land,
And with my lord, who works my veriest good,
Wedding a royal house, to raise up brethren
Unto my sons? Shall I not cease from wrath?
What aileth me, when the Gods proffer boons?
Have I not children? Know I not that we 880
Are exiles from our own land, lacking friends?"
Thus musing, was I ware that I had nursed
Folly exceeding, anger without cause.
Now then I praise thee : wise thou seem'st to me
In gaining us this kinship, senseless I,
Who in these counsels should have been thine
ally,
Have furthered all, have decked the bridal couch,
And joyed to minister unto the bride.
But we are—women : needs not harsher word.
Yet shouldst thou not for evil render evil, 890
Nor pit against my folly folly of thine.
I yield, confessing mine unwisdom then,
But unto better counsels now am come.
Children, my children, hither : leave the house ;
[Enter CHILDREN.
Come forth, salute your father, and with me
Bid him farewell : be reconciled to friends
Ye, with your mother, from the hate o'erpast.
Truce is between us, rancour hath given place.
Clasp ye his right hand. Woe for ambushed ills!

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

900 ὥς ἐννοοῦμαι δὴ τι τῶν κεκρυμμένων.
 ἄρ', ὦ τέκν', οὕτω καὶ πολὺν ζῶντες χρόνον
 φίλην ὀρέξετ' ὠλένην; τάλαιν' ἐγώ,
 ὡς ἀρτίδακρὺς εἰμι καὶ φόβου πλέα.
 χρόνῳ δὲ νεῖκος πατρὸς ἐξαιρουμένη
 ὄψιν τέρειναν τήνδ' ἐπλησα δακρύων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κάμοι κατ' ὅσων χλωρὸν ὠρμήθη δάκρυ·
 καὶ μὴ προβαίῃ μείζον ἢ τὸ νῦν κακόν.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

910 αἰνῶ, γύναι, τάδ', οὐδ' ἐκεῖνα μέμφομαι·
 εἰκὸς γὰρ ὀργὰς θῆλυ ποιεῖσθαι γένος,
 †γάμους παρεμπολῶντος ἀλλοίους, πόσει.†
 ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ λῶον σὸν μεθέστηκεν κέαρ,
 ἔγνωσ δὲ τὴν νικῶσαν ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ
 βουλήν· γυναικὸς ἔργα ταῦτα σῶφρονος.
 ὑμῖν δέ, παῖδες, οὐκ ἀφροντίστως πατὴρ
 πολλὴν ἔθηκε σὺν θεοῖς προμηθίαν.
 οἶμαι γὰρ ὑμᾶς τῆσδε γῆς Κορινθίας
 τὰ πρῶτ' ἔσεσθαι σὺν κασιγνήτοις ἔτι.
 ἀλλ' αὐξάνεσθε· τᾶλλα δ' ἐξεργάζεται
 πατὴρ τε καὶ θεῶν ὅστις ἐστὶν εὐμενής·
 920 ἴδοιμι δ' ὑμᾶς εὐτραφεῖς ἡβης τέλος
 μολόντας, ἐχθρῶν τῶν ἐμῶν ὑπερτέρους.
 αὕτη, τί χλωροῖς δακρύοις τέγγεις κόρας,
 στρέψασα λευκὴν ἔμπαλιν παρηίδα,
 κοῦκ ἀσμένη τόνδ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ δέχει λόγον;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὐδέν· τέκνων τῶνδ' ἐννοουμένη πέρι.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

θάρσει νυν· εὖ γὰρ τῶνδ' ἐγὼ θήσω πέρι.

MEDEA

I am haunted by the shadow of hidden things ! 900
Ah children, will ye thus, through many a year
Living, still reach him loving arms? Ah me,
How swift to weep am I, how full of fear!
Feuds with your father ended—ah, so late!—
Have filled with tears these soft-relentng eyes.

CHORUS

And from mine eyes start tears of pale dismay.
Ah, may no evil worse than this befall!

JASON

Lady, I praise this mood, yet blame not that :
'Tis nothing strange that womankind should rage
When the spouse trafficketh in alien marriage. 910
But now to better thoughts thine heart hath turned,
And thou, though late, hast seen which policy
Must win : a prudent woman's part is this.
And for you, children, not unheedfully
Your sire hath ta'en much forethought, so help
heaven.

For ye, I ween, in this Corinthian land
Shall with your brethren stand the foremost yet.
Grow ye in strength : the rest shall by your sire,
And whatso God is gracious, be wrought out.
You may I see to goodly stature grown, 920
In manhood's prime, triumphant o'er my foes.
Thou, why with wan tears thus bedew thine eyes,
Turning away from them thy pallid cheek?
Why hear'st thou not with gladness this my speech?

MEDEA

'Tis naught ; but o'er these children broods mine
heart.

JASON

Fear not : all will I order well for them.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

δράσω τάδ'· οὔτοι σοῖς ἀπιστήσω λόγοις.
γυνή δὲ θῆλυ καπὶ δακρύοις ἔφν.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

τί δὴ, τάλαινα, τοῖσδ' ἐπιστένεις τέκνοις;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

930 ἔτικτον αὐτούς· ζῆν δ' ὅτ' ἐξηύχου τέκνα,
εἰσῆλθέ μ' οἶκος εἰ γενήσεται τάδε.
ἀλλ' ὥνπερ εἶνεκ' εἰς ἐμούς ἦκεις λόγους,
τὰ μὲν λέλεκται, τῶν δ' ἐγὼ μνησθήσομαι.
ἐπεὶ τυράννοις γῆς μ' ἀποστείλαι δοκεῖ,—
καμοὶ τάδ' ἐστὶ λῶστα, γιγνώσκω καλῶς,
μήτ' ἐμποδὼν σοὶ μήτε κοιράνοις χθονὸς
ναίειν, δοκῶ γὰρ δυσμενῆς εἶναι δόμοις,—
ἡμεῖς μὲν ἐκ γῆς τῆσδ' ἀπαίρομεν φυγῇ,
940 παῖδες δ' ὅπως ἂν ἐκτραφῶσι σῇ χειρί,
αἰτοῦ Κρέοντα τήνδε μὴ φεύγειν χθόνα.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

οὐκ οἶδ' ἂν εἰ πείσαιμι, πειρᾶσθαι δὲ χρή.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

σὺ δ' ἀλλὰ σὴν κέλευσον αἰτεῖσθαι πατρὸς
γυναῖκα παῖδας τήνδε μὴ φεύγειν χθόνα.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

μάλιστα, καὶ πείσειν γε δοξάζω σφ' ἐγώ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

εἴπερ γυναικῶν ἐστὶ τῶν ἄλλων μία.
συλλήψομαι δὲ τοῦδέ σοι καὶ γὰρ πόνου·
πέμψω γὰρ αὐτῇ δῶρ' ἃ καλλιστεύεται
τῶν νῦν ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν, οἶδ' ἐγώ, πολύ,
λεπτὸν τε πέπλον καὶ πλόκον χρυσήλατον
950 παῖδας φέροντας. ἀλλ' ὅσον τάχος χρεῶν
κόσμον κομίζειν δεῦρο προσπόλων τινά.

MEDEA

MEDEA

I will be brave—will not mistrust thy words ;
But woman is but woman—born for tears.

JASON

Why, hapless one, dost thou sigh over these ?

MEDEA

I bare them. When thou prayedst life for them, 930
Pity stole o'er me, whispering, " Shall this be ? "
But that for which thou cam'st to speech of me
In part is said ; to speak the rest is mine :
Since the king pleaseth forth the land to send me,—
Yea, for me too 'tis best, I know it well,
That I bide not, a stumblingblock to thee
And the land's lords, whose house's foe I seem,—
Lo, from this land I fare to exile forth :
But, that my sons by thine hand may be reared,
Entreat thou Creon that they be not banished. 940

JASON

Prevail I may not, yet must I essay.

MEDEA

Nay then, thy bride bid thou to pray her sire
That thy sons be not banished from this land.

JASON

Yea surely ; and, I trow, her shall I win.

MEDEA

If of her sister women she is one.
I too will bear a part in thine endeavour ;
For I will send her gifts outrivalling far
In beauty aught in these days seen, I know,
A robe fine-spun, a golden diadem ;
Our sons to bear them. Now must an attendant 950
With all speed hither bring the ornaments.

[*Handmaid goes.*

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

εὐδαιμονήσει δ' οὐχ ἔν ἀλλὰ μυρία,
 ἀνδρός τ' ἀρίστου σοῦ τυχοῦς' ὀμευνέτου
 κεκτημένη τε κόσμον ὃν ποθ' Ἥλιος
 πατὴρ πατὴρ δίδωσιν ἐκγόνοισιν οἷς.
 λάζυσθε φερνὰς τάσδε, παῖδες, εἰς χέρας
 καὶ τῇ τυράννῳ μακαρίᾳ νύμφῃ δότε
 φέροντες· οὗτοι δῶρα μεμπτὰ δέξεται.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

960 τί δ', ὦ ματαία, τῶνδε σὰς κενοῖς χέρας ;
 δοκεῖς σπανίζειν δῶμα βασιλικὸν πέπλων,
 δοκεῖς δὲ χρυσοῦ ; σῶξε, μὴ δίδου τάδε. •
 εἵπερ γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἀξιοῖ λόγου τινὸς
 γυνή, προθήσει χρημάτων, σάφ' οἶδ' ἐγώ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

970 μὴ μοι σύ· πείθειν δῶρα καὶ θεοὺς λόγος·
 χρυσὸς δὲ κρείσσων μυρίων λόγων βροτοῖς·
 κείνης ὁ δαίμων, κείνα νῦν αὔξει θεός·
 νέα τυραννεῖ· τῶν δ' ἐμῶν παίδων φυγὰς
 ψυχῆς ἂν ἀλλαξαίμεθ', οὐ χρυσοῦ μόνον.
 ἀλλ', ὦ τέκν', εἰσελθόντε πλουσίους δόμους
 πατὴρ νέαν γυναῖκα, δεσπότην δ' ἐμήν,
 ἱκετεύετ', ἐξαιτείσθε μὴ φεύγειν χθόνα,
 κόσμον διδόντες—τοῦδε γὰρ μάλιστα δεῖ—
 εἰς χεῖρ' ἐκείνην δῶρα δέξασθαι τάδε.
 ἴθ' ὥς τάχιστα· μητρὶ δ' ὦν ἐρᾷ τυχεῖν
 εὐάγγελοι γένοισθε πράξαντες καλῶς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

νῦν ἐλπίδες οὐκέτι μοι παίδων ζῴας, στρ.α
 οὐκέτι· στείχουσι γὰρ ἐς φόνον ἥδη.

MEDEA

Blessings shall hers be, not one, but untold,
Who winneth thee for lord, a peerless spouse,
Who owneth ornaments which once the Sun,
My father's father, to his offspring gave !

Enter handmaid with casket.

Take in your hands, my sons, these bridal gifts,
And to the happy princess-bride bear ye
And give—my gifts she shall not lightly esteem !

JASON

But, fond one, why make void thine hands of these ?
Deem'st thou a royal house hath lack of robes, 960
Or gold, deem'st thou ? Keep these and give them not.
For, if my wife esteems me aught, my wish
Will she prefer to treasures, well I wot.

MEDEA

Nay, speak not so : gifts sway the Gods, they say.
Gold weigheth more with men than countless words.
Hers fortune is ; God favoureth now her cause—
Young, and a queen ! Life would I give for ransom
Of my sons' banishment, not gold alone.
Now, children, enter ye the halls of wealth.
Unto your sire's new wife, my lady-queen, 970
Make supplication, pray ye be not exiled,
And give mine ornaments—most importeth this,
That she in her own hands receive my gifts.
Haste ye, and to your mother bring glad tidings
Of good success in that she longs to win.

[Exeunt JASON and CHILDREN.]

CHORUS

(Str. 1)

Now for the life of the children mine hope hath
been turned to despairing.
No hope any more ! On the slaughterward path
even now are they faring !

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

δέξεται νύμφα χρυσέων ἀναδεσμῶν
 δέξεται δύστανος ἄταν·

980 ξανθᾶ δ' ἀμφὶ κόμα θήσει τὸν Ἴαιδα
 κόσμον αὐτὰ χερσίν.

πέισει χάρις ἀμβρόσιός τ' αὐγὰ πέπλον ἀντ. α'
 χρυσότευκτόν τε στέφανον περιθέσθαι·
 νερτέροις δ' ἤδη πάρα νυμφοκομήσει.
 τοῖον εἰς ἔρκον πεσεῖται
 καὶ μοῖραν θανάτου δύστανος· ἄταν δ'
 οὐχ ὑπερφεύξεται.

990 σὺ δ', ὦ τάλαν, ὦ κακόννυμφε στρ. β'
 κηδεμῶν τυράννων,
 παισὶν οὐ κατειδὼς
 ὀλεθρον βιοτᾶ προσάγεις, ἀλόχῳ
 τε σᾶ στυγερὸν θάνατον.
 δύστανε μοίρας, ὅσον παροίχει.

μεταστένομαι δὲ σὸν ἄλγος, ἀντ. β'
 ὦ τάλαινα παίδων
 μᾶτερ, ἃ φονεύσεις
 τέκνα νυμφιδίων ἕνεκεν λεχέων,
 1000 ἃ σοι προλιπὼν ἀνόμως
 ἄλλη ξυνοικεῖ πόσις συνεύνῃ.
 360

MEDEA

The bride shall receive it, the diadem-garland that
beareth enfolden

Doom for the hapless mid glittering sheen :
And to set the adorning of Hades about her tresses
golden

980

She shall take it her hands between.

(*Ant.* 1)

For its glamour of beauty, its splendour unearthly,
shall swiftly persuade her

To bedeck her with robe and with gold-wrought
crown : she shall soon have arrayed her

In attire as a bride in the presence of phantoms from
Hades uprisen ;

In such dread gin shall her feet be ta'en :
In the weird of death shall the hapless be whelmed,
and from Doom's dark prison

Shall she steal forth never again.

(*Str.* 2)

And thou, wretch, bridegroom accurst, who art fain
of a princely alliance,

990

Blasting thou bringest—unknowing, un-
thinking!—

Of life on thy sons, and thy bride shall to foul death
plight her affiance.

[sinking !

How far from thy fortune of old art thou

(*Ant.* 2)

And amidst my lamentings I mourn for thine anguish,
O hapless mother

Of children, who makest thee ready to
slaughter

Thy babes, to avenge thee on him who would
lawlessly wed with another,

1000

Would forsake thee to dwell with a
prince's daughter,

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

δέσποιν', ἀφείνται παῖδες οἶδε σοὶ φυγῆς,
καὶ δῶρα νύμφῃ βασιλὶς ἀσμένῃ χεροῖν
ἐδέξατ'· εἰρήνῃ δὲ τὰ κεῖθεν τέκνοισ.

ἔα.

τί συγχυθεῖς ἔστηκας ἡνίκ' εὐτυχεῖς ;
τί σὴν ἔστρεψας ἔμπαλιν παρηίδα,
κοῦκ ἀσμένῃ τόνδ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ δέχει λόγον ;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

αἰαῖ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τάδ' οὐ ξυνῶδὰ τοῖσιν ἐξηγγελέμενοις.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

αἰαῖ μάλ' αὖθις.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

1010 οὐκ οἶδα, δόξης δ' ἐσφάλῃν εὐαγγέλου ;
μῶν τιν' ἀγγέλλων τύχην

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἡγγεῖλας οἷ' ἡγγεῖλας· οὐ σὲ μέμφομαι.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

τί δὴ κατηφεῖς ὄμμα καὶ δακρυρροεῖς ;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

πολλή μ' ἀνάγκη, πρέσβυ· ταῦτα γὰρ θεοὶ
κάγῳ κακῶς φρονοῦσ' ἐμηχανησάμην.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

θάρσει· κάτει τοι καὶ σὺ πρὸς τέκνων ἔτι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἄλλους κατάξω πρόσθεν ἢ τάλαιν' ἐγώ.

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ

οὔτοι μόνῃ σὺ σῶν ἀπεξύγῃς τέκνων.
κούφως φέρειν χρὴ θνητὸν ὄντα συμφοράς,

MEDEA

Enter CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN, *with* CHILDREN.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Mistress, remission for thy sons of exile !

Thy gifts the princess-bride with joy received

In hand ; and there is peace unto thy sons.

Ha !

Why dost thou stand confounded mid good hap ?

Now wherefore turnest thou thy face away,

And dost not hear with gladness this my speech ?

MEDEA

Woe's me !

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

This cry is to the tidings not attuned.

MEDEA

Woe yet again !

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Can I have brought ill hap

Unwitting—erred in deeming these glad tidings ? 1010

MEDEA

As they are, are thy tidings : thee I blame not.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Why down-drooped is thine eye ? Why flow thy
tears ?

MEDEA

Needs must they, ancient ; for these things the Gods

And I withal—O fool !—have ill contrived.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Fear not : thy children yet shall bring thee home.

MEDEA

Others ere then shall I send home—ah me !

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN

Not thou alone art severed from thy sons.

Submissively must mortals bear mischance.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

- 1020 δράσω τάδ'. ἀλλὰ βαῖνε δωμάτων ἔσω
καὶ παισὶ πόρσυν' οἷα χρή καθ' ἡμέραν.
ὦ τέκνα τέκνα, σφῶν μὲν ἔστι δὴ πόλις
καὶ δῶμ', ἐν ᾧ λιπόντες ἀθλίαν ἐμὲ
οἰκήσεται αἰεὶ μητρὸς ἐστερημένοι·
ἐγὼ δ' ἐς ἄλλην γαίαν εἰμι δὴ φυγὰς,
πρὶν σφῶν ὄνασθαι κάπιδεῖν εὐδαίμονας,
πρὶν λέκτρα καὶ γυναῖκα καὶ γαμηλίους
εὐνάς ἀγῆλαι λαμπάδας τ' ἀνασχεθεῖν.
ὦ δυστάλαινα τῆς ἐμῆς αὐθαδίας
1030 ἄλλως ἄρ' ὑμᾶς, ὦ τέκν', ἐξεθρεψάμην,
ἄλλως δ' ἐμόχθουν καὶ κατεξάνθην πόνοις,
στερρὰς ἐνεγκούσ' ἐν τόκοις ἀλγηδόνας.
ἦ μὴν ποθ' ἡ δύστηνος εἶχον ἐλπίδας
πολλὰς ἐν ὑμῖν, γηροβοσκήσειν τ' ἐμὲ
καὶ κατθανοῦσαν χερσὶν εὖ περιστελεῖν,
ζηλωτὸν ἀνθρώποισι· νῦν δ' ὄλωλε δὴ
γλυκεῖα φροντίς. σφῶν γὰρ ἐστερημένη
λυπρὸν διάξω βίοτον ἀλγεινόν τ' ἐμοί.
ὑμεῖς δὲ μητέρ' οὐκέτ' ὄμμασιν φίλοις
ὄψεσθ', ἐς ἄλλο σχῆμ' ἀποστάντες βίου.
1040 φεῦ φεῦ· τί προσδέρκεσθέ μ' ὄμμασιν, τέκνα ;
τί προσγελᾶτε τὸν πανύστατον γέλων ;
αἰαῖ· τί δράσω ; καρδία γὰρ οἴχεται,
γυναῖκες, ὄμμα φαιδρὸν ὡς εἶδον τέκνων.
οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην· χαιρέτω βουλευματα
τὰ πρόσθεν· ἄξω παῖδας ἐκ γαίας ἐμούς.
τί δεῖ με πατέρα τῶνδε τοῖς τούτων κακοῖς
λυποῦσαν αὐτὴν δις τόσα κτᾶσθαι κακά ;
οὐ δῆτ' ἔγωγε· χαιρέτω βουλευματα.
καίτοι τί πάσχω ; βούλομαι γέλωτ' ὀφλεῖν

MEDEA

MEDEA

This will I : but within the house go thou,
And for my children's daily needs prepare. 1020

[*Exit* CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN.]

O children, children, yours a city is,
And yours a home, where, leaving wretched me,
Ye shall abide, for ever motherless!
I shall go exiled to another land,
Ere I have joyed in you, have seen your bliss,
Ere I have decked for you the couch, the bride,
The bridal bower, and held the torch on high.
O me accurst in this my desperate mood!
For naught, for naught, my babes, I nurtured you,
And all for naught I laboured, travail-worn, 1030
Bearing sharp anguish in your hour of birth.
Ah for the hopes—unhappy !—all mine hopes
Of ministering hands about mine age,
Of dying folded round with loving arms,
All men's desire ! But now—'tis past—'tis past,
That sweet imagining ! Forlorn of you
A bitter life and woeful shall I waste.
Your mother never more with loving eyes
Shall ye behold, passed to another life.
Woe ! woe ! why gaze your eyes on me, my
darlings ? 1040

Why smile to me the latest smile of all ?
Alas ! what shall I do ? Mine heart is failing
As I behold the light in my sons' eyes !
Women, I cannot ! farewell, purposes
O'erpast ! I take my children from the land.
What need to wring their father's heart with ills
Of these, to gain myself ills twice so many ?
Not I, not I ! Ye purposes, farewell !
Yet—yet—what ails me ? Would I earn derision,

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

- 1050 ἔχθρους μεθείσα τοὺς ἐμὸνς ἀζημίους ;
τολμητέον τάδ'. ἀλλὰ τῆς ἐμῆς κάκης,
τὸ καὶ προέσθαι μαλθακοὺς λόγους φρενί.
χωρεῖτε παῖδες εἰς δόμους· ὅτῳ δὲ μὴ
θέμις παρεῖναι τοῖς ἐμοῖσι θύμασιν,
αὐτῷ μελήσει· χεῖρα δ' οὐ διαφθερώ.
ᾄ ᾄ.
- μὴ δῆτα, θυμέ, μὴ σύ γ' ἐργάσῃ τάδε·
ἔασον αὐτοὺς, ὦ τάλαν, φείσαι τέκνων·
ἐκεῖ μεθ' ἡμῶν ζῶντες εὐφρανοῦσί σε.
μὰ τοὺς παρ' Ἀϊδη νερτέρους ἀλάστορας,
1060 οὔτοι ποτ' ἔσται τοῦθ' ὅπως ἐχθροῖς ἐγὼ
παῖδας παρήσω τοὺς ἐμὸνς καθυβρίσαι.
[πάντως σφ' ἀνάγκη κατθανεῖν· ἐπεὶ δὲ χρή,
ἡμεῖς κτενοῦμεν οἵπερ ἐξεφύσαμεν.]
πάντως πέπρωται ταῦτα, κοῦκ ἐκφεύζεται.
καὶ δὴ 'πὶ κρατὶ στέφανος, ἐν πέπλοισι δὲ
νύμφη τύραννος ὄλλυται, σάφ' οἶδ' ἐγὼ.
ἀλλ', εἰμι γὰρ δὴ τλημονεστάτην ὁδόν,
καὶ τούσδε πέμψω τλημονεστέραν ἔτι,
παῖδας προσειπεῖν βούλομαι. δότ', ὦ τέκνα,
1070 δότ' ἀσπάσασθαι μητρὶ δεξιὰν χέρα.
ὦ φιλτάτη χεῖρ, φίλτατον δέ μοι στόμα
καὶ σχῆμα καὶ πρόσωπον εὐγενὲς τέκνων,
εὐδαιμονοίτην, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖ· τὰ δ' ἐνθάδε
πατὴρ ἀφείλετ'. ὦ γλυκεῖα προσβολή,
ὦ μαλθακὸς χρῶς πνεῦμά θ' ἡδιστον τέκνων.
χωρεῖτε χωρεῖτ'. οὐκέτ' εἰμι προσβλέπειν
οἷα τ' ἐς ὑμᾶς, ἀλλὰ νικῶμαι κακοῖς.
καὶ μανθάνω μὲν οἷα δρᾶν μέλλω κακά·
θυμὸς δὲ κρείσσω τῶν ἐμῶν βουλευμάτων,
1080 ὅσπερ μεγίστων αἵτιος κακῶν βροτοῖς.

MEDEA

Letting my foes slip from mine hand unpunished? 1050
 I must dare this. Out on my coward mood
 That let words of relenting touch mine heart!
 Children, pass ye within. [*Exeunt* CHILDREN.]

Now, whoso may not

Sinless be present at my sacrifice,
 On his head be it: mine hand faltereth not.
 Oh! oh!

O heart, mine heart, do not—do not this deed!
 Let them be, wretched heart, spare thou my babes!
 There dwelling with me shall they gladden thee.
 No!—by the nether fiends that dwell with Hades,
 Never shall this betide, that I will leave 1060
 My children for my foes to trample on!

They needs must die. And, since it needs must be,
 Even I will slay them, I, who gave them life.
 All this is utter doom:—she shall not 'scape!
 Yea, on her head the wreath is; in my robes
 The princess-bride is perishing—I know it!
 But—for I fare on journey most unhappy,
 And shall speed these on yet unhappier—
 I would speak to my sons. [*Re-enter* CHILDREN.]

Give, O my babes,

Give to your mother the right hand to kiss. 1070
 O dearest hand, O lips most dear to me,
 O forin and noble feature of my children,
 Blessing be on you—*there*!—for all things here
 Your sire hath stolen. Sweet, O sweet embrace!
 O children's roseleaf skin, O balmy breath!
 Away, away! Strength faileth me to gaze
 On you, but I am overcome of evil. [*Exeunt* CHILDREN.]
 Now, now, I learn what horrors I intend:
 But passion overmastereth sober thought;
 And this is cause of direst ills to men. 1080

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλάκις ἤδη
 διὰ λεπτοτέρων μύθων ἔμολον
 καὶ πρὸς ἀμίλλας ἦλθον μείζους
 ἢ χρὴ γενεὰν θῆλυν ἐρευνᾶν·
 ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἔστιν μοῦσα καὶ ἡμῖν,
 ἣ προσομιλεῖ σοφίας ἔνεκεν·
 πάσαισι μὲν οὐ· παῦρον δὲ γένος—
 μίαν¹ ἐν πολλαῖς εὖροις ἂν ἴσως—
 οὐκ ἀπόμουσον τὸ γυναικῶν.

1090

καί φημι βροτῶν οἵτινές εἰσιν
 πάμπαν ἄπειροι μῆδ' ἐφύτευσαν
 παῖδας, προφέρειν εἰς εὐτυχίαν
 τῶν γειναμένων.

οἱ μὲν ἄτεκνοι δι' ἀπειροσύνην
 εἴθ' ἡδὺ βροτοῖς εἴτ' ἀνιαρὸν
 παῖδες τελέθουσ' οὐχὶ τυχόντες
 πολλῶν μόχθων ἀπέχονται·
 οἷσι δὲ τέκνων ἔστιν ἐν οἴκοις

1100

γλυκερὸν βλάστημ', ἐσορῶ μελέτη
 κατατρυχομένους τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον·
 πρῶτον μὲν ὅπως θρέψουσι καλῶς
 βίότον θ' ὀπόθεν λείψουσι τέκνοις·
 ἔτι δ' ἐκ τούτων εἴτ' ἐπὶ φλαύροις
 εἴτ' ἐπὶ χρηστοῖς
 μοχθοῦσι, τόδ' ἐστὶν ἄδηλον.

¹ Elmsley: for MSS. παῦρον δὲ δὴ (or τι) γένος.

MEDEA

CHORUS

I

Full oft ere this my soul hath scaled
Lone heights of thought, empyreal steeps,
Or plunged far down the darkling deeps,
Where woman's feebler heart hath failed:—

Yet wherefore failed? Should woman find
No inspiration thrill her breast,
Nor welcome ever that sweet guest
Of Song, that uttereth Wisdom's mind?

Alas! not all! Few, few are they,—
Perchance amid a thousand one
Thou shouldst find,—for whom the sun
Of poesy makes an inner day.

II

Now this I say—calm bliss, that ne'er
Knew love's wild fever of the blood,
The pains, the joys, of motherhood,
Passeth all parents' joy-blent care. 1090

The childless, they that never prove
If sunshine comes, or cloud, to men
With babes—far lie beyond their ken
The toils, the griefs, of parent-love.

But they whose halls with flowerets sweet
Of childhood bloom—I mark them aye
Care-fretted, travailing alway 1100
To win their loved ones nurture meet.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

1110 ἐν δὲ τὸ πάντων λοίσθιον ἤδη
πάσιν κατερῶ θνητοῖσι κακόν·
καὶ δὴ γὰρ ἄλις βιοτόν θ' ἡῦρον,
σῶμά τ' ἐς ἥβην ἤλυθε τέκνων
χρηστοί τ' ἐγένοντ'· εἰ δὲ κυρήσει
δαίμων οὗτος, φροῦδος ἐς Ἄϊδην
θάνατος προφέρων σώματα τέκνων.
πῶς οὖν λυεῖ πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις
τὴνδ' ἔτι λύπην ἀνιαροτάτην
παίδων ἔνεκεν
θνητοῖσι θεοὺς ἐπιβάλλειν;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

1120 φίλαι, πάλαι δὴ προσμένουσα τὴν τύχην
καραδοκῶ τὰ κεῖθεν οἷ προβήσεται.
καὶ δὴ δέδορκα τόνδε τῶν Ἰάσονος
στείχοντ' ὀπαδῶν· πνεῦμα δ' ἡρεθισμένοι
δείκνυσιν ὥς τι καινὸν ἀγγελεῖ κακόν.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὦ δεινὸν ἔργον παρανόμως εἰργασμένη
Μήδεια, φεῦγε φεῦγε, μήτε ναῖαν
λιποῦς' ἀπήνην μήτ' ὄχον πεδοστιβῆ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τί δ' ἄξιόν μοι τῆσδε τυγχάνει φυγῆς;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

ὄλωλεν ἡ τύραννος ἀρτίως κόρη
Κρέων θ' ὁ φύσας φαρμάκων τῶν σῶν ὕπο.

MEDEA

III

One toils with love more strong than death :
Yet—yet—who knoweth whether he
A wise man or a fool shall be
To whom he shall his wealth bequeath ?

But last, but worst, remains to tell :
For though ye get you wealth enow,
And though your sons to manhood grow,
Fair sons and good :—if Death the fell,

To Hades vanishing, bears down
Your children's lives, what profit is
That Heaven hath laid, with all else, this
Upon mankind, lone sorrow's crown ? 1110

MEDEA

Friends, long have I, abiding fortune's hap,
Expected what from yonder shall befall.
And lo, a man I see of Jason's train
Hitherward coming : his wild-fluttering breath
Proclaimeth him the herald of strange ills. 1120

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER

O thou who hast wrought an awful deed and
lawless,
Flee, O Medea, flee, nor once leave thou
The sea-wain, or the car that scours the plain.

MEDEA

Now what hath happed that calleth for such flight ?

MESSENGER

Dead is the princess even now, and dead
Creon her father, by thy poison-drugs.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

κάλλιστον εἶπας μῦθον, ἐν δ' εὐεργέταις
τὸ λοιπὸν ἤδη καὶ φίλοις ἐμοῖς ἔσει.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1130 τί φῆς; φρονεῖς μὲν ὀρθὰ κοῦ μαίνει, γύναι,
ἥτις τυράννων ἐστίαν ἠκισμένην
χαίρεις κλύουσα κοῦ φοβεῖ τὰ τοιάδε;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἔχω τι καὶ γὰρ τοῖς γε σοῖς ἐναντίον
λόγοισιν εἰπεῖν· ἀλλὰ μὴ σπέρχου, φίλος,
λέξον δ' ὅπως ὦλοντο· δις τόσον γὰρ ἂν
τέρψειας ἡμᾶς, εἰ τεθνῶσι παγκάκως.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ

1140 ἐπεὶ τέκνων σὼν ἦλθε δίπτυχος γονῇ
σὺν πατρὶ καὶ παρῆλθε νυμφικούς δόμους,
ἥσθημεν οἷπερ σοῖς ἐκάμνομεν κακοῖς
δμῶες· δι' οἴκων δ' εὐθύς ἦν πολὺς λόγος
σὲ καὶ πόσιν σὸν νεῖκος ἐσπεῖσθαι τὸ πρίν.
κυνεῖ δ' ὁ μὲν τις χεῖρ', ὁ δὲ ξανθὸν κᾶρα
παίδων· ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ τὸς ἡδονῆς ὑπο
στέγας γυναικῶν σὺν τέκνοις ἄμ' ἐσπόμεν.
δέσποινα δ' ἦν νῦν ἀντὶ σοῦ θαυμάζομεν,
πρὶν μὲν τέκνων σὼν εἰσιδεῖν ξυνωρίδα,
πρόθυμον εἶχ' ὀφθαλμὸν εἰς Ἰάσονα·
ἔπειτα μέντοι προῦκαλύψατ' ὄμματα
λευκὴν τ' ἀπέστρεψ' ἔμπαλιν παρηίδα,
1150 παίδων μυσσασθῆναι εἰσόδους· πόσις δὲ σὸς
ὀργὰς ἀφήρει καὶ χόλον νεάνιδος
λέγων τὰδ'· οὐ μὴ δυσμενὲς ἔσει φίλοις,
παύσει δὲ θυμοῦ καὶ πάλιν στρέψεις κᾶρα,
φίλους νομίζουσ' οὔσπερ ἂν πόσις σέθεν,
δέξει δὲ δῶρα καὶ παραιτήσῃ πατρός

MEDEA

MEDEA

A glorious tale thou tellest : thou henceforth
Art of my benefactors and my friends.

MESSENGER

What say'st? Of sound mind art thou, and not
mad,

Who, hearing of the havoc of the hearth 1130
Of kings, art glad, and hast no fear for this?

MEDEA

O yea : I too with words of controversy
Could answer thee :—yet be not hasty, friend,
But tell how died they : thou shouldst gladden me
Doubly, if these most horribly have perished.

MESSENGER

When, with their father, came thy children twain,
And passed into the halls for marriage decked,
Glad were we thralls who sorrowed for thy woes ;
And straightway buzzed from ear to ear the tale 1140
Of truce to old feuds 'twixt thy lord and thee.
One kissed the hand, and one the golden head
Of those thy sons : myself by joy drawn on
Followed thy children to the women's bowers.
Now she which had our worship in thy stead,
Ere she beheld thy chariot-yoke of sons,
Aye upon Jason turned her yearning gaze.
But then before her eyes she cast her veil,
And swept aback the scorn of her white neck,
Loathing thy sons' approach ; but now thy lord,
To turn the maiden's wrath and spite aside, 1150
Thus spake : " Nay, be not hostile to thy friends :
Cease from thine anger, turn thine head again,
Accounting friends whomso thy spouse accounts.
Their gifts receive, and plead thou with thy sire

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

- φυγὰς ἀφεῖναι παισὶ τοῖσδ', ἐμὴν χάριν ;
 ἢ δ' ὥς ἐσεῖδε κόσμον, οὐκ ἠνέσχετο,
 ἀλλ' ἦνεσ' ἀνδρὶ πάντα· καὶ πρὶν ἐκ δόμων
 μακρὰν ἀπείναι πατέρα καὶ παῖδας σέθεν,
 λαβοῦσα πέπλους ποικίλους ἠμπίσχετο,
 1160 χρυσοῦν τε θείσα στέφανον ἀμφὶ βοστρύχοις
 λαμπρῷ κατόπτρῳ σχηματίζεται κόμην,
 ἄψυχον εἰκὼ προσγελῶσα σώματος.
 καῖπειτ' ἀναστᾶσ' ἐκ θρόνων διέρχεται
 στέγας, ἀβρὸν βαίνουσα παλλευκῷ ποδί,
 δώροις ὑπερχαίρουσα, πολλὰ πολλάκις
 τένοντ' ἐς ὀρθὸν ὄμμασι σκοπομένη.
 τούνθενδε μέντοι δεινὸν ἦν θέαμ' ἰδεῖν·
 χροῖαν γὰρ ἀλλάξασα λεχρία πάλιν
 χωρεῖ τρέμουσα κῶλα, καὶ μόλις φθάνει
 1170 θρόνοισιν ἐμπεσοῦσα μὴ χαμαὶ πεσεῖν.
 καὶ τις γεραιὰ προσπόλων, δόξασά που
 ἦ Πανὸς ὀργὰς ἢ τινὸς θεῶν μολεῖν,
 ἀνωλόλυξε, πρὶν γ' ὀρᾶ διὰ στόμα
 χωροῦντα λευκὸν ἀφρόν, ὀμμάτων τ' ἀπὸ
 κόρας στρέφουσιν, αἷμά τ' οὐκ ἐνὸν χροῖ·
 εἴτ' ἀντίμολπον ἦκεν ὀλολυγῆς μέγαν
 κωκυτόν. εὐθύς δ' ἢ μὲν εἰς πατρός δόμους
 ὤρμησεν, ἢ δὲ πρὸς τὸν ἀρτίως πόσιν,
 1180 φράσουσα νύμφης συμφοράς· ἅπαντα δὲ
 στέγη πυκνοῖσιν ἐκτύπει δρομήμασιν.
 ἦδη δ' ἂν ἔλκων κῶλον ἐκπλέθρου δρόμον
 ταχὺς βαδιστῆς τερμόνων ἀνθήπτετο·
 ἢ δ' ἐξ ἀναύδου καὶ μύσαντος ὄμματος
 δεινὸν στενάξασ' ἢ τάλαιν' ἠγείρετο·
 διπλοῦν γὰρ αὐτῇ πῆμ' ἐπεστρατεύετο.
 χρυσοὺς μὲν ἀμφὶ κρατὶ κείμενος πλόκος

MEDEA

To pardon these their exile—for my sake.”
She, when she saw the attire, could not refrain,
But yielded her lord all. And ere their father
Far from her bower with those thy sons had gone,
She took the rich-wrought robes and clad herself,
Circling her ringlets with the golden crown, 1160
And by a shining mirror ranged her tresses,
Smiling at her own phantom image there.
Then, rising from her seat, adown the halls
She paced with mincing tread of ivory feet,
Exulting in the gifts, and oftentimes
Sweeping her glance from neck to ankle-hem.
But then was there a fearful sight to see.
Suddenly changed her colour : reeling back
With trembling limbs she goes ; and scarce in
time

Drops on the couch to fall not on the ground. 1170

Then a grey handmaid, deeming peradventure
That frenzy was of Pan or some God sent,
Raised the prayer-cry, before she saw the foam
White-frothing from her lips, or marked how rolled
Her eyeballs, and her face's bloodless hue ;
Then a long cry of horror, not of prayer,
She shrilled forth. Straight to her father's chambers
one

Darted, and one unto her new-made spouse,
To tell the bride's affliction : all the roof
Echoed with multitudinous-hurrying feet. 1180
And a swift athlete's straining limbs had paced
By this the full length of the furlong course,
When she from trance all speechless of closed eyes
In anguish woke with horrible-shrilling shriek ;
For like two charging hosts her torment came :—
The golden coil about her head that lay

- 1190 θαυμαστὸν ἵει νᾶμα παμφάγου πυρός·
πέπλοι δὲ λεπτοί, σὼν τέκνων δωρήματα,
λεπτὴν ἔδαπτον σάρκα τῆς δυσδαίμονος.
φεύγει δ' ἀναστᾶσ' ἐκ θρόνων πυρουμένη,
σείουσα χαίτην κρᾶτά τ' ἄλλοτ' ἄλλοσε,
ρίψαι θέλουσα στέφανον· ἀλλ' ἀραρότως
σύνδεσμα χρυσὸς εἶχε, πῦρ δ', ἐπεὶ κόμην
ἔσεισε, μᾶλλον δις τόσως τ' ἐλάμπετο.
πίτνει δ' ἐς οὐδας συμφορᾷ νικωμένη,
πλὴν τῷ τεκόντι κάρτα δυσμαθῆς ἰδεῖν·
οὐτ' ὁμμάτων γὰρ δῆλος ἦν κατάστασις
οὐτ' εὐφυνὲς πρόσωπον, αἷμα δ' ἐξ ἄκρου
ἔσταζε κρατὸς συμπεφυρμένον πυρί.
1200 σάρκες δ' ἀπ' ὀστέων ὥστε πεύκινον δάκρυ
γναθμοῖς ἀδήλοις φαρμάκων ἀπέρρεον,
δεινὸν θέαμα· πᾶσι δ' ἦν φόβος θιγεῖν
νεκροῦ· τύχην γὰρ εἶχομεν διδάσκαλον.
πατήρ δ' ὁ τλήμων συμφορᾶς ἀγνωσία
ἄφνω παρελθὼν δῶμα προσπίτνει νεκρῷ·
ᾤμωξε δ' εὐθύς, καὶ περιπτύξας δέμας
κυνεῖ προσανδῶν τοιάδ'· ὦ δύστηνε παῖ,
τίς σ' ὦδ' ἀτίμως δαιμόνων ἀπώλεσε ;
τίς τὸν γέροντα τύμβον ὀρφανὸν σέθεν
1210 τίθησιν ; οἴμοι, συνθάνοιμί σοι, τέκνον.
ἐπεὶ δὲ θρήνων καὶ γόνων ἐπαύσατο,
χρήζων γεραιὸν ἐξαναστῆσαι δέμας
προσείχεθ' ὥστε κισσὸς ἔρνεσιν δάφνης
λεπτοῖσι πέπλοις, δεινὰ δ' ἦν παλαίσματα·
ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἤθελ' ἐξαναστῆσαι γόνυ,
ἡ δ' ἀντελάζυτ'· εἰ δὲ πρὸς βίαν ἄγοι,
σάρκας γεραιὰς ἐσπάρασσ' ἀπ' ὀστέων.
χρόνῳ δ' ἀπέσβη¹ καὶ μεθῆχ' ὁ δύσμορος

¹ Scaliger : for ἀπέστη.

MEDEA

'Gan spurt a marvellous stream of ravening fire :
The delicate robes, the gift thy children brought,
Had fangs to gnaw her delicate tortured flesh !
Upstarting from her seat she flees, all flame, 1190
Shaking her hair, her head, this way and that,
To cast from her the crown ; but firmly fixed
The gold held fast its grip : the fire, whene'er
She shook her locks, with doubled fury blazed.
Then agony-vanquished falls she on the floor,
Marred past all knowledge, save for a father's eyes.
No more was seen her eyes' imperial calm,
No more her comely features ; but the gore
Dripped from her head's crown flecked with blended
fire.

The flesh-flakes from her bones, like the pine's tears, 1200
'Neath that mysterious drug's devourings melted,—
Dread sight !—and came on all folk fear to touch
The corpse : her hideous fate had we for warning.

But, ignorant of all, her wretched sire,
Suddenly entering, falls upon her corpse,
And straightway wailed and clasped the body round,
And kissed it, crying, " O my hapless child,
What God thus horribly hath thee destroyed ?
Who maketh this old sepulchre bereft
Of thee ? Ah me, would I might die with thee ! " 1210
But when from wailing and from moans he ceased,
Fain would he have upraised his aged frame,
Yet clave, as ivy clings to laurel boughs,
To the filmy robes : then was a ghastly wrestling ;
For, while he strained to upraise his knee, she
seemed

To upwrithe and grip him : if by force he haled,
Torn from the very bones was his old flesh.
Life's light at last quenched, he gave up the ghost,

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

- 1220 ψυχὴν· κακοῦ γὰρ οὐκέτ' ἦν ὑπέρτερος.
 κείνται δὲ νεκροὶ παῖς τε καὶ γέρων πατὴρ
 πέλας, ποθεινὴ δακρύοισι συμφορά.
 καὶ μοι τὸ μὲν σὸν ἐκποδὼν ἔστω λόγου·
 γνώσει γὰρ αὐτὴ ζημίας ἀποστροφὴν.
 τὰ θνητὰ δ' οὐ νῦν πρῶτον ἡγοῦμαι σκιάν,
 οὐδ' ἂν τρέσας εἵπομι τοὺς σοφοὺς βροτῶν
 δοκοῦντας εἶναι καὶ μεριμνητὰς λόγων,
 τούτους μεγίστην ζημίαν ὀφλισκάνειν.
 θνητῶν γὰρ οὐδεὶς ἐστὶν εὐδαίμων ἀνὴρ·
 1230 ὄλβου δ' ἐπιρρυέντος εὐτυχέστερος
 ἄλλου γένοιτ' ἂν ἄλλος, εὐδαίμων δ' ἂν οὔ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔοιχ' ὁ δαίμων πολλὰ τῇδ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ
 κακὰ ξυνάπτειν ἐνδίκως Ἰάσονι.
 ὦ τλήμον, ὥς σου συμφορὰς οἰκτείρομεν,
 κόρη Κρέοντος, ἥτις εἰς Ἀίδου δόμους
 οἶχει γάμων ἑκατι τῶν Ἰάσονος.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

- 1240 φίλαι, δέδοκται τοῦργον ὥς τάχιστα μοι
 παῖδας κτανούσῃ τῇσδ' ἀφορμᾶσθαι χθονός,
 καὶ μὴ σχολὴν ἄγουσαν ἐκδοῦναι τέκνα
 ἄλλῃ φονεῦσαι δυσμενεστέρα χερί.
 πάντως σφ' ἀνάγκη κατθανεῖν· ἐπεὶ δὲ χρή,
 ἡμεῖς κτενοῦμεν, οἵπερ ἐξεφύσαμεν.
 ἀλλ' εἴ ὀπλίζου, καρδία. τί μέλλομεν
 τὰ δεινὰ κάναγκαῖα μὴ πράσσειν κακά ;
 ἄγ', ὦ τάλαινα χεὶρ ἐμή, λαβὲ ξίφος,
 λάβ', ἔρπε πρὸς βαλβίδα λυπηρὰν βίου,
 καὶ μὴ κακισθῆς μηδ' ἀναμνησθῆς τέκνων,
 ὥς φίλταθ', ὥς ἔτικτες· ἀλλὰ τήνδε γε
 λαθοῦ βραχεῖαν ἡμέραν παίδων σέθεν,

MEDEA

Ill-starred, down-sinking 'neath destruction's sea.
There lie the corpses, child by grey old sire 1220
Clasped ;—such affliction tears, not words, must
mourn.

And of thy part no word be said by me :—
Thyself from punishment wilt find escape.
But man's lot now, as oft, I count a shadow,
Nor fear to say that such as seem to be
In wit most keen of men, most subtle of speech,
Even these pay heaviest penalty of all ;
For among mortals happy man is none.
In fortune's flood-tide might a man become
More prosperous than his neighbour : happy ?—no ! 1230
[Exit.]

CHORUS

Fortune, meseems, with many an ill this day
Doth compass Jason,—yea, and rightfully.
But O the pity of thy calamity,
Daughter of Creon, who to Hades' halls
Hast passed, because with thee would Jason wed !

MEDEA

Friends, my resolve is taken, with all speed
To slay my children, and to flee this land,
And not to linger and to yield my sons
To death by other hands more merciless.
They needs must die : and, since it needs must be, 1240
Even I will give them death, who gave them life.
Up, gird thee for the fray, mine heart ! Why loiter
To do the dread ill deeds that must be done ?
Come, wretched hand of mine, grasp thou the sword ;
Grasp !—on to the starting-point of a blasted life !
Oh, turn not craven !—think not on thy babes,
How dear they are, how thou didst bear them : nay,
For this short day do thou forget thy sons,

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

1250 καῖπειτα θρήνει. καὶ γὰρ εἰ κτενεῖς σφ', ὅμως
φίλοι γ' ἔφυσαν—δυστυχῆς δ' ἐγὼ γυνή.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ Γᾶ τε καὶ παμφαῆς στρ.
ἀκτὶς Ἀελίου, κατίδεν' ἴδετε τὰν
ὀλομένην γυναῖκα, πρὶν φοινίαν
τέκνοις προσβαλεῖν χέρ' αὐτοκτόνον·
σᾶς γὰρ ἀπὸ χρυσέας γονᾶς
ἔβλασταν, θεοῦ δ' αἵματι πίτνειν
φόβος ὑπ' ἀνέρων.
ἀλλὰ νιν, φάος διογενές, κάτειρ-
γε, κατὰπαυσον, ἔξελ' οἴκων τάλαι-
1260 ναν φοινίαν τ' Ἐρινὺν ὑπ' ἀλαστόρων.

μάταν μόχθος ἔρρει τέκνων, ἀντ.
ἄρα μάταν γένος φίλιον ἔτεκες, ὦ
κυανεᾶν λιπούσα Συμπληγάδων
πετρᾶν ἀξενωτάταν εἰσβολάν.
δειλαία, τί σοι φρενῶν βαρὺς
χόλος προσπίτνει καὶ δυσμενῆς
φόνος ἀμείβεται;
χαλεπὰ γὰρ βροτοῖς ὁμογενῇ μιά-
σματ' † ἐπὶ γαῖαν αὐτοφόνταις συνφ-
1270 δὰ θεόθεν πίτνοντ' ἐπὶ δόμοις ἄχχ.†

MEDEA

Thereafter mourn them. For, although thou slay,
Yet dear they are, and I—am wretched, wretched ! 1250

[*Exit* MEDEA.]

CHORUS

(*Str.*)

O Earth, O all-revealing splendour
Of the Sun, look down on a woman accurst,
Or ever she slake the murder-thirst
Of a mother whose hands would smite the tender
Fruit of her womb.
Look down, for she sprang of thy lineage golden :
Man's vengeance threatens—thy seed are holden
'Neath the shadow of doom !
But thou, O heaven-begotten glory,
Restrain her, refrain her : the wretched, the gory
Erinyes by demons dogged, we implore thee, 1260
Snatch thou from yon home !

(*Ant.*)

For naught was the childbirth-travail wasted ;
For naught didst thou bear them, the near
and the dear,
O thou who hast fled through the Pass of Fear,
From the dark-blue Clashing Craggs who hast
hasted
Speeding thy flight !
Alas for her !—wherefore hath grim wrath
stirred her
Through depths of her soul, that ruthless
murder

Her wrongs must requite ?
For stern upon mortals the vengeance falleth
For kin's blood spilt ; from the earth it calleth,
A voice from the Gods, and the slayers appalleth
On whose homes it shall light. 1270

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΠΑΙΣ Α΄

οἶμοι, τί δράσω ; ποῖ φύγω μητρὸς χέρας ;

ΠΑΙΣ Β΄

οὐκ οἶδ', ἀδελφὲ φίλτατ'· ὀλλύμεσθα γάρ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀκούεις βοᾶν ἀκούεις τέκνων ;

ὦ τλᾶμον, ὦ κακοτυχὲς γύναι.

παρέλθω δόμους ; ἀρῆξαι φόνον

δοκεῖ μοι τέκνοις.

ΠΑΙΣ Α΄

ναί, πρὸς θεῶν, ἀρῆξατ'· ἐν δέοντι γάρ.

ΠΑΙΣ Β΄

ὥς ἐγγὺς ἦδη γ' ἐσμέν ἀρκύων ξίφους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τάλαιν', ὥς ἄρ' ἦσθα πέτρος ἢ σίδα-

1280

ρος, ἅτις τέκνων ὄν ἔτεκες

ἄροτον αὐτόχειρι μοίρᾳ κτενεῖς.

μίαν δὴ κλύω μίαν τῶν πάρος

γυναῖκ' ἐν φίλοις χέρα βαλεῖν τέκνοις,

Ἴνῳ μανεῖσαν ἐκ θεῶν, ὅθ' ἡ Διὸς

δάμαρ νιν ἐξέπεμψε δωμάτων ἄλῃ.

πίτνει δ' ἅ τάλαιν' ἐς ἄλμαν φόνῳ

τέκνων δυσσεβεῖ,

ἀκτῆς ὑπερτείνασα ποντίας πόδα,

δυοῖν τε παῖδοιν συνθανοῦσ' ἀπόλλυται.

MEDEA

[CHILDREN'S cries behind the scenes]

CHILD 1

What shall I do?—how flee my mother's hands?

CHILD 2

I know not, dearest brother. Death is here!

CHORUS

Ah the cry!—dost thou hear it?—the children's cry!
Wretch!—woman of cursèd destiny!
Shall I enter? My heart crieth, "Rescue the
children from murder nigh!"

[*They beat at the barred doors.*

CHILD 1

Help!—for the Gods' sake help! Sore is our need!

CHILD 2

The sword's death-net is closing round us now!

[*Silence within. Blood flows out beneath the door. The
women shrink back.*]

CHORUS

Wretch! of what rock is thy breast?—of what steel
is the heart of thee moulded,
That the babes thou hast borne, with the selfsame
hands that with love have enfolded

1280

These, thou hast set thee to slay?
Of one have I heard that laid hands on her loved
ones of old, one only,
Even Ino distraught of the Gods, when Zeus' bride
drave her, lonely

And lost, from her home to stray;
And she fell—ah wretch!—on the brink as she
stood

Of the sea-scaur: guilt of children's blood
Dragged downwards her feet to the salt sea-flood,
And she died with her children twain.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

1290 τί δῆτ' οὖν γένοιτ' ἂν ἔτι δεινόν ; ὦ
 γυναικῶν λέχος πολύπονον
 ὅσα βροτοῖς ἔρεξας ἤδη κακά.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

γυναῖκες αἰ τῆσδ' ἐγγὺς ἔστατε στέγης,
 ἄρ' ἐν δόμοισιν ἢ τὰ δειν' εἰργασμένη
 Μῆδεια τοισίδ', ἢ μεθέστηκεν φυγῇ ;
 δεῖ γάρ νιν ἦτοι γῆς σφε κρυφθῆναι κάτω,
 ἢ πτηνὸν ἄραι σῶμ' ἐς αἰθέρος βάθος,
 εἰ μὴ τυράννων δώμασιν δώσει δίκην.
 πέποιθ' ἀποκτείνασα κοιράνους χθονὸς
 1300 ἄθῳς αὐτῇ τῶνδε φεύξεσθαι δόμων ;
 ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ αὐτῆς φροντίδ' ὥς τέκνων ἔχω·
 κείνην μὲν οὖς ἔδρασεν ἔρξουσιν κακῶς,
 ἐμῶν δὲ παίδων ἦλθον ἐκσώσω βίον,
 μή μοί τι δράσωσ' οἱ προσήκοντες γένει,
 μητρῷον ἐκπράσσουντες ἀνόσιον φόνον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ τλήμον, οὐκ οἶσθ' οἱ κακῶν ἐλήλυθας,
 Ἰᾶσον· οὐ γὰρ τούσδ' ἂν ἐφθέγξω λόγους.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

τί δ' ἔστιν ; ἢ που καὶ μ' ἀποκτεῖναι θέλει ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

παῖδες τεθνᾶσι χειρὶ μητρῷά σέθεν.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

1310 οἷμοι τί λέξεις ; ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας, γύναι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὥς οὐκέτ' ὄντων σῶν τέκνων φρόντιζε δή.

MEDEA

What ghaſtlier horror remains to be wrought?
O bride-bed of women, with anguiſh fraught, 1290
What ſcathe upon mortals ere now haſt thou
brought,

What manifold bane !

Enter JASON, with SERVANTS.

JASON

Women, which ſtand anear unto this roof—
Is ſhe within the halls, ſhe who hath wrought
Dread deeds, Medea, or in flight paſſed thence ?
For either muſt ſhe hide her 'neath the earth,
Or liſt on wings her frame to heaven's far depths,
Or taſte the vengeance of a royal houſe.
How, truſts ſhe, having murdered the land's lords,
Scatheleſs herſelf from theſe halls forth to flee ? 1300
Yet not for her care I, but for my ſons.
Whom ſhe hath wronged ſhall recompence her
wrong :

But I to ſave my children's life am come,
Leſt to my grief the kiſsmen of the dead
Avenge on them their mother's impious murder.

CHORUS

Wretch, thou know'ſt not how deep thou art whelmed
in woe,
Jason, or thou haſt uttered not ſuch words.

JASON

What now ?—and is ſhe fain to ſlay me too ?

CHORUS

Thy ſons are dead, ſlain by the mother's hand.

JASON

Ah me !—what ſay'ſt thou ?—thou haſt killed me,
woman ! 1310

CHORUS

Thy children are no more : ſo think of them.

385

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ποῦ γάρ νιν ἔκτειν', ἐντὸς ἧ ἔξωθεν δόμων ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πύλας ἀνοίξας σὼν τέκνων ὄψει φόνον.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

χαλᾶτε κληῖδας ὡς τάχιστα, πρόσπολοι,
ἐκλύεθ' ἁρμούς, ὡς ἴδω διπλοῦν κακόν,
τοὺς μὲν θανόντας, τὴν δὲ τίσωμαι φόνῳ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τί τάσδε κινεῖς κἀναμοχλεύεις πύλας,
νεκροὺς ἐρευνῶν κἀμὲ τὴν εἰργασμένην ;
1320 παῦσαι πόνου τοῦδ'· εἰ δ' ἐμοῦ χρεῖαν ἔχεις,
λέγ' εἴ τι βούλει, χειρὶ δ' οὐ ψαύσεις ποτέ.
τοιόνδ' ὄχημα πατρὸς Ἥλιος πατὴρ
δίδωσιν ἡμῖν, ἔρυμα πολεμίας χερὸς.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ὦ μῖσος, ὦ μέγιστον ἐχθίστη γύναι
θεοῖς τε κἄμοι παντί τ' ἀνθρώπων γένει,
ἥτις τέκνοισι σοῖσιν ἐμβαλεῖν ξίφος
ἔτλης τεκούσα κἄμ' ἄπαιδ' ἀπώλεσας·
καὶ ταῦτα δράσας ἥλιόν τε προσβλέπεις
καὶ γαῖαν, ἔργον τλᾶσα δυσσεβέστατον.
1330 ὅλοι· ἐγὼ δὲ νῦν φρονῶ, τότε οὐ φρονῶν
ὅτ' ἐκ δόμων σε βαρβάρου τ' ἀπὸ χθονὸς
Ἑλλην' ἐς οἶκον ἡγόμεν, κακὸν μέγα,
πατρός τε καὶ γῆς προδότιν ἧ σ' ἐθρέψατο.
τὸν σὸν δ' ἀλάστορ' εἰς ἔμ' ἔσκηψαν θεοί·
κτανοῦσα γὰρ δὴ σὸν κάσιν παρέστιον,
τὸ καλλίπρωρον εἰσέβης Ἀργοὺς σκάφος.
ἥρξω μὲν ἐκ τοιῶνδε· νυμφευθεῖσα δὲ

MEDEA

JASON

How?—slew them? Where?—within, without, the
halls?

CHORUS (*pointing to pavement before doors*)

Open, and thou shalt see thy children's corpses.

JASON

Burst in the bolts with all speed, serving-men—
Force hinges!—let me see this twofold horror,—
The dead, and her,—and in her blood avenge me!

MEDEA *appears above the palace roof in a chariot
drawn by dragons.*

MEDEA

Why shakest thou these doors and wouldst unbar,
Seeking thy dead and me who wrought the deed?
Cease this essay. If thou wouldst aught of me,
Say what thou wilt: thine hand shall touch me never. 1320
Such chariot hath my father's sire, the Sun,
Given me, a defence from foeman's hand.

JASON

O thing abhorred! O woman hatefullest
To Gods, to me, to all the race of men,
Thou that couldst thrust the sword into the babes
Thou bar'st, and me hast made a childless ruin!
Thus hast thou wrought, yet look'st thou on the sun
And earth, who hast dared a deed most impious?
Now ruin seize thee!—clear I see, who saw not
Then, when from halls and land barbarian 1330
To a Greek home I bare thee, utter bane,
Traitor to sire and land that nurtured thee!
Thy guilt's curse-bolt on me the Gods have launched;
For thine own brother by his hearth thou slewest
Ere thou didst enter fair-prowed Argo's hull.
With such deeds thou beganest. Wedded then

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

- 1340 παρ' ἀνδρὶ τῷδε καὶ τεκούσά μοι τέκνα,
 εὐνῆς ἕκατι καὶ λέχους σφ' ἀπώλεσας.
 οὐκ ἔστιν ἥτις τοῦτ' ἂν Ἑλληνὶς γυνὴ
 ἔτλη ποθ', ὧν γε πρόσθεν ἠξίουν ἐγὼ.
 γῆμαί σε, κῆδος ἐχθρὸν ὀλέθριόν τ' ἐμοί,
 λείαναν, οὐ γυναῖκα, τῆς Τυρσηνίδος
 Σκύλλης ἔχουσαν ἀγριωτέραν φύσιν.
 ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ ἂν σε μυρίοις ὀνειδέσι
 δάκοιμι· τοιόνδ' ἐμπέφυκέ σοι θράσος·
 ἔρρ', αἰσχροποιέ καὶ τέκνων μαιφόνε.
 ἐμοὶ δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν daίμον' αἰάζειν πάρα,
 ὃς οὔτε λέκτρων νεογάμων ὀνήσομαι,
 οὐ παῖδας οὐς ἔφυσα κἄξεθρεψάμην
 1350 ἔξω προσειπεῖν ζῶντας, ἀλλ' ἀπώλεσα.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

- μακρὰν ἂν ἐξέτεινα τοῖσδ' ἐναντίον
 λόγοισιν, εἰ μὴ Ζεὺς πατὴρ ἠπίστατο
 οἷ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ πέπονθας οἷά τ' εἰργάσω·
 σὺ δ' οὐκ ἔμελλες τᾶμ' ἀτιμάσας λέχη
 τερπνὸν διάξειν βίοντον ἐγγελῶν ἐμοί,
 οὐδ' ἢ τύραννος οὐδ' ὁ σοὶ προσθεὶς γάμους
 Κρέων ἀνατὶ τῇσδέ μ' ἐκβαλεῖν χθονός.
 πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ λείαναν, εἰ βούλει, κάλει
 καὶ Σκύλλαν ἢ Τυρσηνὸν ὥκησεν πέδον·†¹
 1360 τῆς σῆς γὰρ ὡς χρὴ καρδίας ἀνθηψάμην.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

καυτή γε λυπεῖ καὶ κακῶν κοινωνὸς εἶ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

σάφ' ἴσθι· λυεῖ δ' ἄλγος, ἣν σὺ μὴ ᾔγγελᾷς.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ὦ τέκνα, μητρὸς ὡς κακῆς ἐκύρσατε.

¹ Reading doubtful : *σπέος* and *πόρον* have been proposed.

MEDEA

To this man, and the mother of my sons,
For wedlock-right's sake hast thou murdered them.
There is no Grecian woman that had dared
This :—yet I stooped to marry thee, good sooth, 1340
Rather than these, a hateful bride and fell,
A tigress, not a woman, harbouring
A fiercer nature than Tyrrhenian Scylla.
But—for untold revilings would not sting
Thee, in thy nature is such hardihood :—
Avaunt, thou miscreant stained with thy babes'
blood !

For me remains to wail my destiny,
Who of my new-wed bride shall have no joy,
And to the sons whom I begat and nurtured
Living I shall not speak—lost, lost to me ! 1350

MEDEA

I might have lengthened out long controversy
To these thy words, if Father Zeus knew not
How I have dealt with thee and thou with me.
'Twas not for thee to set my rights at naught,
And live a life of bliss, bemocking me,
Nor for thy princess, and thy marriage-kinsman,
Creon, unscathed to banish me this land !
Wherefore a tigress call me, an thou wilt,
Or Scylla, haunter of Tyrrhenian shore ;
For thine heart have I wrung, as well behaved. 1360

JASON

Ha, but thou sorrowest too, dost share mine ills !

MEDEA

O yea : yet grief is gain, so thou laugh not.

JASON

O children mine, what miscreant mother had ye !

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ὦ παῖδες, ὥς ὤλεσθε πατρώα νόσφ.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

οὔτοι νυν ἡμῇ δεξιὰ σφ' ἀπώλεσεν.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἀλλ' ὕβρις οἷ τε σοὶ νεοδμήτες γάμοι.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

λέχους σφέ γ' ἡξίωσας εἵνεκα κτανεῖν ;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

σμικρὸν γυναικὶ πῆμα τοῦτ' εἶναι δοκεῖς ;

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ἥτις γε σώφρων· σοὶ δὲ πάντ' ἐστὶν κακά.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

1370

οἷδ' οὐκέτ' εἰσὶ· τοῦτο γάρ σε δήξεται.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

οἷδ' εἰσὶν, οἷμοι, σφ' κᾶρα μάστορες.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ἴσασιν ὅστις ἤρξε πημονῆς θεοί.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ἴσασι δῆτα σὴν γ' ἀπόπτυστον φρένα.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

στυγεῖ· πικρὰν δὲ βᾶξιν ἐχθαίρω σέθεν.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ σὴν· ῥᾷδιοι δ' ἀπαλλαγαί.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

πῶς οὖν ; τί δράσω ; κάρτα γὰρ κ' ἐγὼ θέλω.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

θάψαι νεκρούς μοι τούσδε καὶ κλαῦσαι πάρες.

MEDEA

MEDEA

O sons, destroyed by your own father's lust !

JASON

Sooth, 'twas no hand of mine that murdered them.

MEDEA

Nay, but thine insolence and thy new-forged bonds.

JASON

How, claim the right for wedlock's sake to slay
them !

MEDEA

A light affliction count'st thou this to a wife ?

JASON

A virtuous wife :—in *thy* sight naught were good !

MEDEA

These live no more : this, this shall cut thine heart ! 1370

JASON

They live—ah me !—avengers on thine head.

MEDEA

The Gods know who began this misery.

JASON

Yea, verily, thy spirit abhorred they know.

MEDEA

Abhorred art thou : I loathe thy bitter tongue.

JASON

And I thine :—yet were mutual riddance easy.

MEDEA

How then ?—what shall I do ?—fain would I this.

JASON

Yield me my dead to bury and bewail.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

1380 οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ σφᾶς τῇδ' ἐγὼ θάψω χερί,
 φέρουσ' ἐς Ἥρας τέμενος Ἀκραίας θεοῦ,
 ὥς μή τις αὐτοὺς πολεμίων καθυβρίση,
 τύμβους ἀνασπῶν γῇ δὲ τῇδε Σισύφου
 σεμνὴν ἐορτὴν καὶ τέλη προσάψομεν
 τὸ λοιπὸν ἀντὶ τοῦδε δυσσεβοῦς φόνου.
 αὐτὴ δὲ γαῖαν εἴμι τὴν Ἑρεχθέως,
 Αἰγεί συνοικήσουσα τῷ Πανδίωνος.
 σὺ δ', ὥσπερ εἰκός, κατθανεῖ κακὸς κακῶς,
 Ἄργους κára σὸν λειψάνῳ πεπληγμένος,
 - πικρὰς τελευτὰς τῶν νέων¹ γάμων ἰδών.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

1390 ἀλλὰ σ' Ἐρινὺς ὀλέσειε τέκνων
 φονία τε Δίκη.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

τίς δὲ κλύει σου θεὸς ἢ δαίμων,
 τοῦ ψευδόρκου καὶ ξειναπάτου;

ΙΑΣΩΝ

φεῦ φεῦ, μυσαρὰ καὶ παιδολέτορ.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

στείχε πρὸς οἴκους καὶ θάπτ' ἄλοχον.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

στείχω, δισσῶν γ' ἄμορος τέκνων.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὐπω θρηνεῖς μένε καὶ γῆρας.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

ὦ τέκνα φίλτατα.

¹ Weil : for MS. ἐμῶν.

MEDEA

MEDEA

Never : with this hand will I bury them,
To Mountain Hera's precinct bearing them,
That never foe may do despite to them, 1380
Rifling their tomb. This land of Sisyphus
Will I constrain with solemn festival
And rites to atone for this unhallowed murder.
But I—I go unto Erechtheus' land,
With Aegeus to abide, Pandion's son.
Thou, as is meet, foul wretch, shalt foully die,
By Argo's wreckage smitten on the skull,
Who hast seen this new bridal's bitter ending.

JASON

Now the Fury-avenger of children smite thee,
And Justice that looketh on murder requite thee ! 1390

MEDEA

What God or what spirit will heed thy request,
Caitiff forsworn, who betrayest the guest ?

JASON

Avaunt, foul thing by whose deed thy children have
died !

MEDEA

Go hence to thine halls, thence lead to the grave
thy bride !

JASON

I go, a father forlorn of the two sons reft from his
home !

MEDEA

Not yet dost thou truly mourn : abide till thine old
age come.

JASON

O children beloved above all !

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

μητρί γε , σοὶ δ' οὔ.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

κάπειτ' ἔκανες ;

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

σέ γε πημαίνουσ'.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

1400

ὦμοι, φιλίου χρήζω στόματος
παίδων ὃ τάλας προσπτύξασθαι.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

νῦν σφε προσαυδᾷς, νῦν ἀσπάζει,
τότ' ἀπωσάμενος.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

δός μοι πρὸς θεῶν
μαλακοῦ χρωτὸς ψαῦσαι τέκνων.

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

οὐκ ἔστι· μάτην ἔπος ἔρριπται.

ΙΑΣΩΝ

1410

Ζεῦ, τάδ' ἀκούεις ὥς ἀπελαυνόμεθ',
οἷά τε πάσχομεν ἐκ τῆς μυσαρᾶς
καὶ παιδοφόνου τῆσδε λεαίνης ;
ἀλλ' ὅποσον γοῦν πάρα καὶ δύναμαι
τάδε καὶ θρηνῶ κάπιθεάζω,
μαρτυρόμενος δαίμονας ὥς μοι
τέκνα κτείνας' ἀποκωλύεις
ψαῦσαι τε χεροῖν θάψαι τε νεκρούς,
οὐς μήποτ' ἐγὼ φύσας ὄφελον
πρὸς σοῦ φθιμένους ἐπιδέσθαι.

MEDEA

MEDEA

Of their mother beloved, not of thee.

JASON .

Yet she slew them !

MEDEA

That thou mightest fall in the net that
thou spreadest for me.

JASON

Woe's me ! I yearn with my lips to press
My sons' dear lips in my wretchedness.

1400

MEDEA

Ha, now art thou calling upon them, now wouldst
thou kiss,
Who rejectedst them then ?

JASON

For the Gods' sake grant me but this,
The sweet soft flesh of my children to feel !

MEDEA

No—wasted in air is all thine appeal.

JASON

O Zeus, dost thou hear it, how spurned I am ?—
What outrage I suffer of yonder abhorred
Child-murderess, yonder tigress-dam ?
Yet out of mine helplessness, out of my shame,
I bewail my beloved, I call to record
High heaven, I bid God witness the word,
That my sons thou hast slain, and withholdest
me,

1410

That mine hands may not touch them, nor bury
their clay !
Would God I had gotten them never, this day
To behold them destroyed of thee !

395

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πολλῶν ταμίας Ζεὺς ἐν Ὀλύμπῳ,
πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί·
καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,
τῶν δ' ἀδοκῆτων πόρον ἦνρε θεός.
τοιόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα.

MEDEA

CHORUS

All dooms be of Zeus in Olympus ; 'tis his to reveal
them.

Manifold things unhopèd-for the Gods to accom-
plishment bring.

And the things that we looked for, the Gods deign
not to fulfil them ;

And the paths undiscerned of our eyes, the Gods
unseal them.

So fell this marvellous thing.

[*Exeunt OMNES.*

ALCESTIS

ARGUMENT

APOLLO, being banished for a season from Olympus, and condemned to do service to a mortal, became herdsman of Admetus, King of Phærae in Thessaly. Yet he loathed not his earthly taskmaster, but loved him, for that he was a just man, and hospitable exceedingly. Wherefore he obtained from the Fates this boon for Admetus, that, when his hour of death should come, they should accept in ransom for his life the life of whosoever should have before consented to die in his stead. Now when this was made known, none of them which were nearest by blood to the king would promise to be his ransom in that day. Then Alcestis his wife, the daughter of Pelias King of Iolcos, pledged her to die for him. Of her love she did it, and for the honour of wifehood. And the years passed by, and the tale was told in many lands; and all men praised Alcestis, but Admetus bore a burden of sorrow, for day by day she became dearer to him, a wife wholly true, a mother most loving, and a lady to her thralls gentle exceedingly. But when it was known by tokens that the day was come, Admetus repented him sorely, but it availed not, for no mortal may recall a pledge once given to the Gods. And on that day there came to the palace Apollo to plead with Death for Alcestis' sake; and a company of Elders of Phærae, to ask of her state and to make mourning for her. And when she was dead, ere she was borne forth to burial, came Hercules, son of Zeus, in his journeying, seeking the guest's right of meat and lodging, but not knowing aught of that which had come to pass. Of him was a great deliverance wrought, which is told herein.

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

**ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ
ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ
ΧΟΡΟΣ
ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ
ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ
ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ
ΕΤΜΗΛΟΣ
ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
ΦΕΡΗΣ
ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ**

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

APOLLO.

DEATH.

CHORUS, *composed of Elders of Pherae.*

HANDMAID.

ALCESTIS, *daughter of Pelias, and wife of Admetus.*

ADMETUS, *King of Pherae.*

EUMELUS, *son of Admetus and Alcestis.*

HERCULES.

PHERES, *father of Admetus.*

SERVANT, *steward of the palace.*

Guards, attendants, handmaids, and mourners.

The scene throughout is in front of the palace of Admetus
at Pherae.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

᾽Ω δώματ' Ἀδμήτει', ἐν οἷς ἔτλην ἐγὼ
θῆσαν τράπεζαν αἰνέσαι θεός περ ὦν.
Ζεὺς γὰρ κατακτὰς παῖδα τὸν ἐμὸν αἴτιος
Ἀσκληπιόν, στέρνοισιν ἐμβαλὼν φλόγα·
οὐδ' ἄν χολωθείς τέκτονας Δίου πυρὸς
κτείνω Κύκλωπας· καί με θητεύειν πατὴρ
θνητῷ παρ' ἀνδρὶ τῶνδ' ἄποιν' ἠνάγκασεν.
ἐλθὼν δὲ γαῖαν τήνδ' ἐβουφόρβουν ξένω,
καὶ τόνδ' ἔσφζον οἶκον ἐς τόδ' ἡμέρας.
10 ὅσιον γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ὅσιος ὦν ἐτύγχανον,
παιδὸς Φέρητος, ὃν θανεῖν ἐρρυσάμην,
Μοίρας δολώσας· ἤνεσαν δέ μοι θεαὶ
Ἀδμητον ἄδην τὸν παραυτίκ' ἐκφυγεῖν,
ἄλλον διαλλάξαντα τοῖς κάτω νεκρόν.
πάντας δ' ἐλέγξας καὶ διεξελθὼν φίλους,
πατέρα γεραιάν θ' ἢ σφ' ἔτικτε μητέρα,
οὐχ ἡὔρε πλὴν γυναικὸς ὅστις ἤθελε
θανεῖν πρὸ κείνου μῆδ' ἔτ' εἰσορᾶν φάος·
ἢ νῦν κατ' οἶκους ἐν χεροῖν βαστάζεται
20 ψυχορραγοῦσα· τῇδε γάρ σφ' ἐν ἡμέρᾳ
θανεῖν πέπρωται καὶ μεταστῆναι βίου.
ἐγὼ δέ, μὴ μίασμά μ' ἐν δόμοις κίχῃ,
λείπω μελάρων τῶνδε φιλτάτην στέγην.
ἥδη δὲ τόνδε Θάνατον εἰσορῶ πέλας,

ALCESTIS

Enter APOLLO.

APOLLO

HALLS of Admetus, hail ! I stooped my pride
Here to brook fare of serfs, yea I, a God !
The fault was fault of Zeus : he slew my son
Asclepius—hurled the levin through his heart.
Wroth for the dead, his smiths of heavenly fire,
The Cyclopes, I slew ; for blood-atonement
Allfather made me serf to a mortal man

To this land came I, tended mine host's kine,
And warded still his house unto this day.
Righteous myself, I found a righteous man, 10
The son of Pheres : him I snatched from death,
Cozening the Fates : the Sisters promised me—
“Admetus shall escape the imminent death
If he for ransom gives another life.”

To all he went—all near and dear,—and asked
Father and grey-haired mother who gave him
life ;

But, save his wife, found none that would consent
For him to die and never more see light.
Now in his arms upborne within yon home
She gaspeth forth her life : for on this day 20
Her weird it is to die and fleet from life.

I, lest pollution taint me in their house,
Go forth of yonder hall's belovèd roof. [*Enter* DEATH.
Lo, yonder Death ;—I see him nigh at hand,

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ἱερῇ θανόντων, ὅς νιν εἰς Ἴλιδου δόμους
μέλλει κατάξει· συμμέτρως δ' ἀφίκετο,
φρουρῶν τόδ' ἡμαρ ὧ θανεῖν αὐτὴν χρεών.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

ᾄ ᾄ·

30 τί σὺ πρὸς μελάθροισι ; τί σὺ τῇδε πολεῖς,
Φοῖβ' ; ἀδικεῖς αὖ τιμὰς ἐνέρων
ἀφοριζόμενος καὶ καταπαύων.
οὐκ ἤρκεσέ σοι μόνον Ἀδμήτου
διακωλύσαι, Μοίρας δολίῳ
σφήλαντι τέχνῃ ; νῦν δ' ἐπὶ τῇδ' αὖ
χέρα τοξήρῃ φρουρεῖς ὀπλίσας,
ἢ τόδ' ὑπέστη πόσιν ἐκλύσας
αὐτὴ προθανεῖν Πελίου παῖς.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

θάρσει· δίκην τοι καὶ λόγους κεδνοὺς ἔχω.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

τί δῆτα τόξων ἔργον, εἰ δίκην ἔχεις ;

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

40 σύνηθες ἀεὶ ταῦτα βαστάζειν ἐμοί.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

καὶ τοῖσδέ γ' οἴκοις ἐκδίκως προσωφελεῖν.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

φίλου γὰρ ἀνδρὸς συμφοραῖς βαρύνομαι.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

καὶ νοσφιεῖς με τοῦδε δευτέρου νεκροῦ ;

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἄλλ' οὐδ' ἐκείνον πρὸς βίαν σ' ἀφειλόμην.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

πῶς οὖν ὑπὲρ γῆς ἐστι κοῦ κάτω χθονός ;

ALCESTIS

Priest of the dead, who comes to hale her down
To Hades' halls —well hath he kept his time,
Watching this day, whereon she needs must die.

DEATH

Ha, thou at the palace! Wilt not make room,
Phoebus?—thou wrestest the right yet again :
Thou removest the landmarks of Gods of Gloom, 30
And thou makest their honours vain.

Did this not suffice thee, to thwart that doom
Of Admetus, when, all by thy cunning beguiled
Were the Fates, that thou now must be warding the
wife

With thine hand made ready the bowstring to
strain,
Though she pledged her from death to redeem with
her life

Her lord,—she, Pelias' child?

APOLLO

Fear not : fair words and justice are with me.

DEATH

Justice with thee!—what needeth then the bow?

APOLLO

This?—'tis my wont to bear it evermore. 40

DEATH

Yea, and to aid yon house in lawless wise.

APOLLO

Mine heart is heavy for my friend's mischance.

DEATH

What, wilt thou wrest from me this second corpse?

APOLLO

Nay, not that other did I take by force.

DEATH

Not?—why on earth then?—why not underground?

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

δάμαρτ' ἀμείψας, ἦν σὺ νῦν ἤκεις μέτα.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

κάπάξομαί γε νερτέραν ὑπὸ χθόνα.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

λαβὼν ἴθ'. οὐ γὰρ οἶδ' ἂν εἰ πείσαιμί σε.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

κτείνειν γ' ὃν ἂν χρῆ ; τοῦτο γὰρ τετάγμεθα.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

50 οὐκ, ἀλλὰ τοῖς μέλλουσι θάνατον ἐμβαλεῖν.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

ἔχω λόγον δὴ καὶ προθυμίαν σέθεν.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἔστ' οὖν ὅπως Ἄλκηστις εἰς γῆρας μόλοι ;

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστι τιμαῖς κάμὲ τέρπεσθαι δόκει.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

οὗτοι πλέον γ' ἂν ἡ μίαν ψυχὴν λάβοις.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

νέων φθινόντων μείζον ἄρνημαι γέρας :

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

κἂν γραῦς ὄληται, πλουσίως ταφήσεται.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

πρὸς τῶν ἐχόντων, Φοῖβε, τὸν νόμον τίθης.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

πῶς εἶπας ; ἀλλ' ἡ καὶ σοφὸς λέληθας ὦν ;

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

ὠνοῖντ' ἂν οὖς πάρεστι γηραιοὺς θανεῖν.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

60 οὐκουν δοκεῖ σοι τήνδε μοι δοῦναι χάριν ;

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

οὐ δῆτ' ἐπίστασαι δὲ τοὺς ἐμοὺς τρόπους.

ALCESTIS

APOLLO

She was his ransom, she for whom thou comest.

DEATH

Yea, and will hale her deep beneath the earth.

APOLLO

Take her and go : I trow I shall not bend thee—

DEATH

To slay the victim due ?—mine office this.

APOLLO

Nay, but to smite with death the ripe for death. 50

DEATH

I grasp thine argument—and thine earnestness !

APOLLO

And may Alcestis never see old age ?

DEATH

Never :—should I not love mine honours too ?

APOLLO

'Tis soon or late,—thou canst but take one life.

DEATH

Yet mine the goodlier prize when die the young.

APOLLO

Though she die old, rich obsequies still are thine.

DEATH

Lo, Phoebus making laws to shield the rich !

APOLLO

How say'st thou ?—thou a sophist unawares !

DEATH

Would wealth not buy the boon of dying old ?

APOLLO

So then thou wilt not grant this grace to me ? 60

DEATH

Nay surely—dost not know my wonted way ?

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἐχθρούς γε θνητοῖς καὶ θεοῖς στυγουμένους.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν δύναιο πάντ' ἔχειν ἅ μὴ σε δεῖ.

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ

ἦ μὲν σὺ παύσει καίπερ ὤμος ὦν ἄγαν·
τοῖος Φέρητος εἴσι πρὸς δόμους ἀνὴρ,
Εὐρυσθέως πέμψαντος ἵππειον μέτα
ὄχημα Θρήκης ἐκ τύπων δυσχειμέρων,
ὃς δὴ ξενωθείς τοῖσδ' ἐν Ἀδμήτου δόμοις
βία γυναῖκα τήνδε σ' ἐξαιρήσεται.
70 κοῦθ' ἢ παρ' ἡμῶν σοι γενήσεται χάρις
δράσεις θ' ὁμοίως ταῦτ', ἀπεχθήσει τ' ἐμοί.

ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ

πόλλ' ἂν σὺ λέξας οὐδὲν ἂν πλέον λάβοις.
ἦ δ' οὖν γυνὴ κάτεισιν εἰς Ἄιδου δόμους.
στείχω δ' ἐπ' αὐτήν, ὥς κατάρξωμαι ξίφει·
ἱερὸς γὰρ οὗτος τῶν κατὰ χθονὸς θεῶν
οὔτου τόδ' ἔγχος κρατὸς ἀγνίστη τρίχα.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

τί ποθ' ἥσυχία πρόσθεν μελάβρων ;
τί σεσίγηται δόμος Ἀδμήτου ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

80 ἀλλ' οὐδὲ φίλων πέλας οὐδεῖς,
ὅστις ἂν εἴποι πότερον φθιμένην
βασιλείαν χρὴ πενθεῖν, ἢ ζῶσ'
ἔτι φῶς λεύσσει Πελίου τόδε παῖς
Ἀλκηστις, ἐμοὶ πᾶσί τ' ἀρίστη
δόξασα γυνὴ
πόσιν εἰς αὐτῆς γεγενῆσθαι·

ALCESTIS

APOLLO

Hateful to mortals this, and loathed of Gods.

DEATH

All things beyond thy rights thou canst not have.

APOLLO

Surely thou shalt forbear, though ruthless thou,
So mighty a man to Pheres' halls shall come,
Sent of Eurystheus forth, the courser-car
From winter-dreary lands of Thrace to bring.
Guest-welcomed in Admetus' palace here,
By force yon woman shall he wrest from thee.
Yea, thou of me shalt have no thank for this,
And yet shalt do it, and shalt have mine hate.

70

[*Exit* APOLLO.]

DEATH

Talk on, talk on : no profit shalt thou win.
This woman down to Hades' halls shall pass.
For her I go : my sword shall seal her ours :
For consecrated to the Nether Gods
Is every head whose hair this sword hath shorn.

[*Exit* DEATH.]

Enter CHORUS, *dividing to right and left, so that the sections answer one another till they unite at l. 112.*

HALF-CHORUS 1

What meaneth this hush afront of the hall?
The home of Admetus, why voiceless all?

HALF-CHORUS 2

No friend of the house who should speak of its plight
Is nigh, who should bid that we raise the keen
For the dead, or should tell us that yet on the light
Alcestis looketh, and liveth the Queen,
The daughter of Pelias, noblest, I ween—
Yea, in all men's sight
Most leal to her lord of all wives hath she been.

80

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

κλύει τις ἡ στεναγμὸν ἡ
χειρῶν κτύπον κατὰ στέγας
ἡ γόον ὥς πεπραγμένων ;
οὐ μὰν οὐδέ τις ἀμφιπόλων
στατίζεται ἀμφὶ πύλας.
εἰ γὰρ μετακύμιος ἄτας,
ὦ Παιάν, φανείης.

στρ. α'

90

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

οὐ τὰν φθιμένης γ' ἐσιώπων.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

νέκυς ἤδη.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

οὐ δὴ φροῦδός γ' ἐξ οἴκων.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

πόθεν ; οὐκ αὐχῶ. τί σε θαρσύνει ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

πῶς ἂν ἔρημον τάφον Ἄδμητος
κεδνῆς ἂν ἔπραξε γυναικός ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ α'

πυλῶν πάροιθε δ' οὐκ ὀρῶ
πηγαῖον ὥς νομίζεται
χέρνιβ' ἐπὶ φθιτῶν πύλαις,
χαίτη τ' οὔτις ἐπὶ προθύροις
τομαῖος, ἃ δὴ νεκύων
πένθει πίτνει· οὐ νεολαΐα
δουπεῖ χεῖρ γυναικῶν.

ἀντ. α'

100

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ β'

καὶ μὴν τόδε κύριον ἡμαρ—

ALCESTIS

HALF-CHORUS 1

Or hearest thou mourning or sighing (*Str.* 1)

Or beating of hands,

Or the wail of bereaved ones outcrying ?

No handmaid stands

At the palace-gate.

[bird flying 90

O Healer, appear for the dying, appear as a bright

'Twixt the surges of fate !

HALF-CHORUS 2

She lives !—were she dead, they had raised the keen.

HALF-CHORUS 1

Nay, a corpse is all that was once a queen.

HALF-CHORUS 2

But not forth of the doors is the death-train gone.

HALF-CHORUS 1

Whence cometh thine hope, which I boast not mine
own ?

HALF-CHORUS 2

Would the King without pomp of procession have
yielded the grave the possession

Of so dear, of so faithful an one ?

HALF-CHORUS 1

(*Ant.* 1)

Nor the cup in the gateway appeareth,

From the spring that they bear

To the gate that pollution feareth,

100

Nor the severed hair

In the porch for the dead,

Which the mourner in bitterness sheareth, neither
beating of hands one heareth

On maiden's head.

HALF-CHORUS 2

Yet surely is this the appointed day—

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α΄

τί τόδ' αὐδᾶς ;

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β΄

ὦ χρὴ σφε μολεῖν κατὰ γαίας.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α΄

ἔθιγες ψυχῆς, ἔθιγες δὲ φρενῶν.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β΄

χρὴ τῶν ἀγαθῶν διακναιομένων
 πενθεῖν ὅστις
 χρηστὸς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς νενόμισται.

110

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ναυκληρίαν στρ. β'
 ἔσθ' ὅποι τις αἶας
 στείλας, ἧ Λυκίας
 εἴτ' ἐπὶ τὰς ἀνύδρους
 Ἀμμωνιάδας ἔδρας
 δυστάνου παραλύσαι
 ψυχάν· μόρος γὰρ ἀπότομος
 πλάθει· θεῶν δ' ἐπ' ἐσχάραις
 οὐκ ἔχω ἐπὶ τίνα
 μηλοθύταν πορευθῶ.

120

μόνος δ' ἄν, εἰ φῶς τόδ' ἦν ἀντ. β'
 ὄμμασιν δεδορκῶς
 Φοίβου παῖς, προλιποῦς
 ἦλθεν ἔδρας σκοτίους
 Ἄϊδα τε πύλας·

ALCESTIS

HALF-CHORUS 1

Ah ! what wilt thou say ?

HALF-CHORUS 2

Whereon of her doom she must pass to the tomb.

HALF-CHORUS 1

With a keen pang's smart hast thou stabbed mine heart.

HALF-CHORUS 2

It is meet, when the good are as flowers plucked away,

That in sorrow's gloom

110

Should the breast of the old tried friend have part.

CHORUS

Though ye voyage all seas, (Str. 2)

Ye shall light on no lands,

Nor on Lycia's leas,

Nor Ammonian sands,

Whence redemption shall come for the wretched, or
loosing of Death's dread bands.

Doom's chasm hard by

Yawns fathomless-deep.

What availeth to cry

120

To the Gods, or to heap

Their altars with costly oblations, to plead with the
slaughter of sheep ?

Ah, once there was one !— (Ant. 2)

Were life's light in the eyes

Of Phoebus's son,

Then our darling might rise

From the mansions of darkness, through portals of
Hades return to our skies ;

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

130 δμαθέντας γὰρ ἀνίστη,
πρὶν αὐτὸν εἶλε διόβολον
πλήκτρον πυρὸς κεραυνίου.
νῦν δὲ τίν' ἔτι βίου
ἐλπίδα προσδέχωμαι ;

πάντα γὰρ ἤδη τετέλεσται βασιλεύσι,
πάντων δὲ θεῶν ἐπὶ βωμοῖς
αἰμόρραντοι θυσίαι πλήρεις,
οὐδ' ἔστι κακῶν ἄκος οὐδέν.

140 ἀλλ' ἦδ' ὁπαδῶν ἐκ δόμων τις ἔρχεται
δακρυρροοῦσα· τίνα τύχην ἀκούσομαι ;
πενθεῖν μὲν, εἴ τι δεσπότησι τυγχάνει,
συγγνωστόν· εἰ δ' ἔτ' ἔστιν ἔμφυχος γυνή
εἴτ' οὖν ὄλωλεν εἰδέναι βουλοίμεθ' ἄν.

ΘΕΡΑΠΙΑΝΑ

καὶ ζῶσαν εἰπεῖν καὶ θανοῦσαν ἔστι σοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ πῶς ἂν αὐτὸς κατθάνοι τε καὶ βλέποι ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΙΑΝΑ

ἤδη προνωπῆς ἔστι καὶ ψυχορραγεῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ τλήμον, οἷας οἶος ὦν ἄμαρτάνεις.

ΘΕΡΑΠΙΑΝΑ

οὐπω τόδ' οἶδε δεσπότης, πρὶν ἂν πάθῃ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐλπίς μὲν οὐκέτ' ἔστι σῶζεσθαι βίον ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΙΑΝΑ

πεπρωμένη γὰρ ἡμέρα βιάζεται.

ALCESTIS

For he raised up the dead,
Ere flashed from the heaven,
From Zeus' hand sped,
That bolt of the levin.

But now what remaineth to wait for?—what hope of
her life is given? 130

No sacrifice more
Unrendered remaineth ;
No God, but the gore
From his altars down-raineth ;

Yet healing is none for our ills, neither balm that
the spirit sustaineth.

[*Enter HANDMAID.*

But hither cometh of the handmaids one,
Weeping the while. What tidings shall I hear?
For all afflictions that befall thy lords
Well mayst thou grieve ; but if thy lady lives
Or even now hath passed, fain would we know. 140

HANDMAID

She liveth, and is dead : both mayst thou say.

CHORUS

Ay so !—how should the same be dead and live ?

HANDMAID

Even now she droopeth, gasping out her life.

CHORUS

O stricken king—how noble a queen thou lovest !

HANDMAID

His depth of loss he knows not ere it come.

CHORUS

And hope—is no hope left her life to save ?

HANDMAID

None—for the day foredoomed constraineth her.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκουν ἐπ' αὐτῇ πράσσεται τὰ πρόσφορα ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ

κόσμος γ' ἔτοιμος, ᾧ σφε συνθάψει πόσις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

150 ἴστω νυν εὐκλεῆς γε κατθανουμένη
γυνή τ' ἀρίστη τῶν ὑφ' ἡλίῳ μακρῷ.

ΘΕΡΑΠΑΙΝΑ

πῶς δ' οὐκ ἀρίστη ; τίς δ' ἐναντιώσεται ;
τί χρὴ γενέσθαι τὴν ὑπερβεβλημένην
γυναῖκα ; πῶς δ' ἂν μᾶλλον ἐνδείξαιτό τις
πόσιν προτιμῶσ' ἢ θέλουσ' ὑπερθανεῖν ;
καὶ ταῦτα μὲν δὴ πᾶσ' ἐπίσταται πόλις·
ἂ δ' ἐν δόμοις ἔδρασε θαυμάσει κλύων.
ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἦσθεθ' ἡμέραν τὴν κυρίαν
ἤκουσαν, ὕδασι ποταμίῳις λευκὸν χρῶα
160 ἐλούσατ', ἐκ δ' ἐλούσα κεδρίνων δόμων
ἐσθῆτα κόσμον τ' εὐπρεπῶς ἡσκήσατο,
καὶ στᾶσα πρόσθεν Ἑστίας κατηύξατο·
δέσποιν', ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔρχομαι κατὰ χθονός,
πανύστατόν σε προσπίτνους' αἰτήσομαι,
τέκν' ὀρφανεῦσαι τὰμά, καὶ τῷ μὲν φίλῃν
σύζευξον ἄλοχον, τῇ δὲ γενναῖον πόσιν.
μηδ' ὥσπερ αὐτῶν ἢ τεκοῦσ' ἀπόλλυμαι
θανεῖν ἀώρους παῖδας, ἀλλ' εὐδαίμονας
ἐν γῇ πατρώᾳ τερπνὸν ἐκπλήσαι βίον.
170 πάντα δὲ βῶμους οἱ κατ' Ἀδμήτου δόμους
προσῆλθε κάξέστεψε καὶ προσηύξατο,
πτόρθων ἀποσχίζουσα μυρσίνης φόβην,
ἄκλαυστος ἀστένακτος, οὐδὲ τοῦπιόν
κακὸν μεθίστη χρωτὸς εὐειδῇ φύσιν.
καῖπειτα θάλαμον εἰσπεσοῦσα καὶ λέχος,

ALCESTIS

CHORUS

Are all things meet, then, being done for her?

HANDMAID

Yea, ready is her burial-attire.

CHORUS

Let her be sure that glorious she dies 150
And noblest far of women 'neath the sun.

HANDMAID

Noblest?—how not?—what tongue will dare gain-
say?

What must the woman be who passeth her?
How could a wife give honour to her lord
More than by yielding her to die for him?
And this—yea, all the city knoweth this;
But what within she did, hear thou, and marvel.
For when she knew that the appointed day
Was come, in river-water her white skin
She bathed, and from the cedar-chests took forth 160
Vesture and jewels, and decked her gloriously,
And before Vesta's altar stood, and prayed:
“Queen, for I pass beneath the earth, I fall
Before thee now, and nevermore, and pray:—
Be mother to my orphans: mate with him
A loving wife, with her a noble husband.
Nor, as their mother dieth, so may they,
My children, die untimely, but with weal
In the home-land fill up a life of bliss.”
To all the altars through Admetus' halls [prayed, 170
She went, with wreaths she hung them, and she
Plucking the while the tresses of the myrtle,
Tearless, unsighing, and the imminent fate
Changed not the lovely rose-tint of her cheek.
Then to her bower she rushed, fell on the bed;

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

180 ἐνταῦθα δὴ ἑδάκρυσε καὶ λέγει τάδε·
 ὦ λέκτρον, ἔνθα παρθένεις ἔλυσ' ἐγὼ
 κορεύματ' ἐκ τοῦδ' ἀνδρός, οὐ θνήσκω πέρι,
 χαῖρ'· οὐ γὰρ ἐχθαίρω σ'. ἀπώλεσας δέ με
 μόνην· προδοῦναι γάρ σ' ὀκνοῦσα καὶ πόσιν
 θνήσκω. σέ δ' ἄλλη τις γυνὴ κεκτήσεται,
 σῶφρων μὲν οὐκ ἂν μᾶλλον, εὐτυχὴς δ' ἴσως.
 κυνεῖ δὲ προσπίτνουσα, πᾶν δὲ δέμνιον
 ὀφθαλμοτέγκτω δεύεται πλημμυρίδι.
 ἐπεὶ δὲ πολλῶν δακρύων εἶχεν κόρον,
 στείχει προνωπὴς ἐκπεσοῦσα δεμνίων,
 καὶ πολλὰ θαλάμων ἐξιοῦσ' ἐπεστράφη
 κᾶρριψεν αὐτὴν αὖθις εἰς κοίτην πάλιν.
 190 παῖδες δὲ πέπλων μητρὸς ἐξηρητμένοι
 ἔκλαιον· ἡ δὲ λαμβάνουσ' ἐς ἀγκάλας
 ἡσπάζετ' ἄλλοτ' ἄλλον, ὥς θανουμένη.
 πάντες δ' ἔκλαιον οἰκέται κατὰ στέγας
 δέσποιναν οἰκτεῖροντες. ἡ δὲ δεξιὰν
 προὔτειν' ἐκάστω, κοῦτις ἦν οὕτω κακὸς
 ὃν οὐ προσεῖπε καὶ προσερρήθη πάλιν.
 τοιαῦτ' ἐν οἴκοις ἐστὶν Ἀδμήτου κακά.
 καὶ κατθανών τ' ἂν ὦλετ', ἐκφυγὼν δ' ἔχει
 τοσοῦτον ἄλγος, οὐ ποτ' οὐ λελησεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

200 ἡ που στενάζει τοισίδ' Ἀδμητος κακοῖς,
 ἐσθλῆς γυναικὸς εἰ στερηθῆναί σφε χρή ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΙΑΝΑ

κλαίει γ' ἄκοιτιν ἐν χεροῖν φίλην ἔχων,
 καὶ μὴ προδοῦναι λίσσεται, τὰμήχανα
 ζητῶν· φθίνει γὰρ καὶ μαραίνεται νόσφ,
 παρειμένη δέ, χειρὸς ἄθλιον βάρος,
 ὁμῶς δὲ καίπερ σμικρὸν ἐμπνέουσ' ἔτι

ALCESTIS

And there, O there she wept, and thus she speaks :
" O couch, whereon I loosed the maiden zone
For this man, for whose sake I die to-day,
Farewell : I hate thee not. Me hast thou slain,
Me only : loth to fail thee and my lord 180
I die ; but thee another bride shall own,
Not more true-hearted ; happier perchance."
Then falls thereon, and kisses : all the bed
Is watered with the flood of melting eyes.
But having wept her fill of many tears,
Drooping she goeth, reeling from the couch ;
Yet oft, as forth the bower she passed, returned,
And flung herself again upon the bed.
And the babes, clinging to their mother's robes,
Were weeping ; and she clasped them in her
arms, 190
Fondling now this, now that, as one death-doomed.
And all the servants 'neath the roof were weeping,
Pitying their lady. But to each she stretched
Her right hand forth ; and none there was so
mean
To whom she spake not and received reply.
Such are the ills Admetus' home within.
Now, had he died, he had ended ; but, in 'scaping,
He bears a pain that he shall ne'er forget.

CHORUS

Doth not Admetus groan for this affliction
Of such a noble wife to be bereft ? 200

HANDMAID

Ay, weeps, and clasps his dear one in his arms,
And prays, " Forsake me not !"—asking the while
The impossible, for still she wanes and wastes,
Drooping her hand, a misery-burdened weight ;
But yet, albeit hardly breathing still,

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

210 βλέψαι πρὸς αὐγὰς βούλεται τὰς ἡλίου,
ὥς οὔποτ' αὐθις, ἀλλὰ νῦν πανύστατον
[ἀκτῖνα κύκλον θ' ἡλίου προσόψεται.]
ἀλλ' εἶμι καὶ σὴν ἀγγελῶ παρουσίαν
οὐ γάρ τι πάντες εὖ φρονοῦσι κοιράνοις,
ὥστ' ἐν κακοῖσιν εὐμενεῖς παρεστάναι.
σὺ δ' εἰ παλαιὸς δεσπότης ἐμοῖς φίλος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ α'

ἰὼ Ζεῦ, τίς ἂν πᾶ πόρος κακῶν
γένοιτο καὶ λύσις τύχας ἃ πάρεστι κοιράνοις;

ΧΟΡΟΣ β'

ἔξεισί τις ; ἡ τέμω τρίχα,
καὶ μέλανα στολμὸν πέπλων
ἀμφιβαλώμεθ' ἤδη ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ γ'

δῆλα μέν, φίλοι, δῆλά γ', ἀλλ' ὅμως
θεοῖσιν εὐχώμεσθα· θεῶν
γὰρ δύναμις μεγίστη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ δ'

220 ὦναξ Παιάν,
ἔξευρε μηχανάν τιν' Ἀδμήτῳ κακῶν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ε'

πόριζε δὴ πόριζε· καὶ πάρος γὰρ
τῷδ' ἐφεῦρες τοῦτο,¹ καὶ νῦν
λυτήριος ἐκ θανάτου γενοῦ,
φόνιον δ' ἀπόπαυσον Ἄιδαν.

¹ Hermann : for MSS. τοῦδ' ἐφεῦρες, καὶ νῦν.

ALCESTIS

To the sun's rays fain would she lift her eyes,
As nevermore, but for the last time now
Destined to see the sun's beam and his orb.
But I will go and make thy presence known :
For 'tis not all that love so well their kings 210
As to stand by them, in afflictions loyal.
But from of old my lords were loved of thee. [*Exit.*

[*Nine members of the CHORUS chant successively :—*

CHORUS 1 .

O Zeus, for our lords is there naught but
despair?

No path through the tangle of evils, no loosing of
chains that have bound them?

CHORUS 2

No tidings?—remaineth but rending of hair,
And the stricken ones turned to the tomb with the
garments of sorrow around them?

CHORUS 3

Even so—even so! yet uplift we in prayer
Our hands to the Gods, for that power from the days
everlasting hath crowned them.

CHORUS 4

O Healer-king, 220
Find thou for Admetus the balm of relief, for the
captive deliverance!

CHORUS 5

Vouchsafe it, vouchsafe it, for heretofore
Hast thou found out a way; even now once
more

Pluck back our belovèd from Hades' door,
Strike down Death's hand red-reeking with
gore!

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ ς'

παπαῖ φεῦ, παπαῖ φεῦ· ἰὼ ἰώ.
ὦ παῖ Φέρητος, οἷ' ἔπρα-
ξας δάμαρτος σᾶς στερεείς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ ζ'

ἄρ' ἄξια καὶ σφαγᾶς τάδε,
καὶ πλέον ἢ βρόχῳ δέρην
οὐρανίῳ πελάσσαι ;

230

ΧΟΡΟΣ η'

τὰν γὰρ οὐ φίλαν ἀλλὰ φιλτάταν
γυναῖκα κατθανοῦσαν εἶν
ἄματι τῷδ' ἐπόψει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ θ'

ἰδού ἰδού,
ἧδ' ἐκ δόμων δὴ καὶ πόσις πορεύεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βόασον ὦ, στέναξον, ὦ Φεραία
χθών, τὰν ἀρίσταν
γυναῖκα μαραιομένην νόσῳ
κατὰ γᾶς χθόνιον παρ' Αἰδαν.
οὔποτε φήσω γάμον εὐφραίνειν
πλέον ἢ λυπεῖν, τοῖς τε πάροιθεν
τεκμαιρόμενος καὶ τάσδε τύχας
λεύσσω βασιλέως, ὅστις ἀρίστης
ἀπλακῶν ἀλόχου τῇσδ' ἀβίωτον
τὸν ἔπειτα χρόνον βιοτεύσει.

240

ALCESTIS

CHORUS 6

Woe's me ! woe's me !—let the woe-dirge ring !
Ah, scion of Pheres, alas for thy lot, for love's long
severance !

CHORUS 7

For such things on his sword might a man not fall,
Or knit up his throat in the noose 'twixt the heaven
and the earth that quivereth ? 230

CHORUS 8

For his dear one—nay, but his dearest of all
Shall he see on this day lying dead, while her spirit
by Lethe shivereth.

CHORUS 9

O look !—look yonder, where forth of the hall
She cometh, and he at her side whose life by her
life she delivereth.

CHORUS, UNITED

Cry, Land Pheraean, shrill the keen !
Lift up thy voice to wail thy best
There dying, and thy queenliest
Slow wasting to the Gates Unseen !

Tell me not this, that wedlock brings
To them that wed more bliss than woe.
I look back to the long-ago : 240
I muse on these unhappiest things.

Lo, here a king—he forfeiteth
The truest heart, the noblest wife ;
And what shall be henceforth his life ?
A darkened day, a living death.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

"Αλιε καὶ φάος ἀμέρας, στρ. α'
οὐράνιαί τε δῖναι νεφέλας δρομαίου.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὄρᾱ σὲ κάμέ, δύο κακῶς πεπραγότας,
οὐδὲν θεοὺς δράσαντας ἀνθ' ὅτου θανεῖ.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

γαῖά τε καὶ μελάβθρων στέγαι ἀντ. α'
νυμφίδιοί τε κοῖται πατρίας Ἴωλκοῦ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

250 ἔπαιρε σαυτήν, ὦ τάλαινα, μὴ προδῶς·
λίσσου δὲ τοὺς κρατοῦντας οἰκτεῖραι θεοὺς.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ὀρῶ δίκωπον ὀρῶ σκάφος [ἐν λίμνᾳ], στρ. β'
νεκύων δὲ πορθμεὺς
ἔχων χέρ' ἐπὶ κοντῷ Χάρων
μ' ἤδη καλεῖ· τί μέλλεις ;
ἐπείγουν· σὺ κατείργεις.
τάδε τοί με σπερχόμενος ταχύνει.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οἴμοι, πικράν γε τήνδε μοι ναυκληρίαν
ἔλεξας. ὦ δύσδαιμον, οἶα πάσχομεν.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

260 ἄγει μ' ἄγει μέ τις—οὐχ ὀράς ;— ἀντ. β'
νεκύων ἐς αὐλάν
ὑπ' ὀφρύσι κυαναυγέσι

ALCESTIS

*Enter female attendants supporting ALCESTIS, accompanied
by ADMETUS and CHILDREN.*

ALCESTIS

O Sun, and the day's dear light, (Str. 1)
And ye clouds through the wheeling heaven in the
race everlasting flying !

ADMETUS

He seeth thee and me, two stricken ones,
Which wrought the Gods no wrong, that thou shouldst
die.

ALCESTIS

O Land, O stately height (Ant. 1)
Of mine halls, and my bridal couch in Iolcos my
fatherland lying !

ADMETUS

Uplift thee, hapless love, forsake me not, 250
And pray the mighty Gods in ruth to turn.

ALCESTIS

(Str. 2)
I see the boat with the oars twin-sweeping,
And, his hand on the pole as in haste aye keeping,
Charon the Ferryman calleth, "What ho, wilt thou
linger and linger ?
Hasten,—'tis thou dost delay me !" he crieth with
beckoning finger.

ADMETUS

Ah me ! a bitter ferrying this thou namest !
O evil-starred, what woes endure we now !

ALCESTIS

(Ant. 2)
One haleth me—haleth me hence to the mansion
Of the dead !—dost thou mark not the darkling
expansion

260

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

βλέπων πτερωτὸς Ἄϊδας.
τί ῥέξεις ; μέθες. οἶαν
ὁδὸν ἅ δειλαιοτάτα προβαίνω.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οἰκτρὰν φίλοισιν, ἐκ δὲ τῶν μάλιστ' ἐμοὶ
καὶ παισίν, οἷς δὴ πένθος ἐν κοινῷ τόδε.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

μέθετε μέθετέ μ' ἤδη. ἐπ' ὧδ.
κλίνατ', οὐ σθένω ποσίν·
πλησίον Ἄϊδας·
σκοτία δ' ἐπ' ὅσσοις νύξ ἐφέρπει.
τέκνα τέκν', οὐκέτι δὴ
οὐκέτι μάτηρ σφῶν ἔστιν.
χαίροντες, ὦ τέκνα, τόδε φάος ὀρώπων.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οἶμοι· τόδ' ἔπος λυπρὸν ἀκούω
καὶ παντὸς ἐμοὶ θανάτου μεῖζον.
μὴ πρὸς σε θεῶν τλῆς με προδοῦναι,
μὴ πρὸς παίδων οὖς ὀρφανιεῖς,
ἀλλ' ἄνα, τόλμα·
σοῦ γὰρ φθιμένης οὐκέτ' ἂν εἶην·
ἐν σοὶ δ' ἐσμέν καὶ ζῆν καὶ μὴ·
σὴν γὰρ φιλίαν σεβόμεσθα.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

280 Ἄδμηθ', ὁρᾷς γὰρ τὰ μὰ πράγμαθ' ὥς ἔχει,
λέξαι θέλω σοι πρὶν θανεῖν ἅ βούλομαι.
ἐγὼ σε πρεσβεύουσα κἀντὶ τῆς ἐμῆς
ψυχῆς καταστήσασα φῶς τόδ' εἰσορᾷν,
θυήσκω, παρόν μοι μὴ θανεῖν ὑπὲρ σέθεν,
ἀλλ' ἄνδρα τε σχεῖν Θεσσαλῶν ὃν ἤθελον,
καὶ δῶμα ναίειν ὄλβιον τυραννίδι,

ALCESTIS

Of the pinions of Hades, the blaze of his eyes 'neath
their caverns out-glaring ?
What wouldst thou ?—Unhand me !—In anguish and
pain by what path am I faring !

ADMETUS

Woeful to them that love thee : most to me
And to thy babes, sad sharers in this grief.

ALCESTIS

Let be—let me sink back to rest me : (*Epode*)
There is no strength left in my feet.
Hades is near, and the night
Is darkening down on my sight.
Darlings, farewell : on the light
Long may ye look :—I have blessed ye
Ere your mother to nothingness fleet.

270

ADMETUS

Ah me ! for thy word rusheth bitterness o'er me,
Bitterness passing the anguish of death !
Forsake me not now, by the Gods I implore thee.
By the babes thou wilt orphan, O yield not thy
breath !
Look up, be of cheer : if thou diest, before me
Is nothingness. Living, we aye live thine,
And we die in thy death ; for our hearts are a shrine
Wherein for thy love passing word we adore thee !

ALCESTIS

Admetus,—for thou seest all my plight,—
Fain would I speak mine heart's wish ere I die.
I, honouring thee, and setting thee in place
Before mine own soul still to see this light,
Am dying, unconstrained to die for thee.
I might have wed what man Thessalian
I would, have dwelt wealth-crowned in princely halls ;

280

429

- οὐκ ἠθέλησα ζῆν ἀποσπασθεῖσά σου
 σὺν παισὶν ὀρφανοῖσιν· οὐδ' ἐφεισάμην
 ἡβης ἔχουσα δῶρ', ἐν οἷς ἑτερπόμην.
 290 καίτοι σ' ὁ φύσας χῆ τεκοῦσα προὔδοσαν,
 καλῶς μὲν αὐτοῖς κατθανεῖν ἦκον βίου,
 καλῶς δὲ σῶσαι παῖδα κεῦκλεῶς θανεῖν.
 μόνος γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἦσθα, κοῦτις ἐλπίς ἦν
 σοῦ κατθανόντος ἄλλα φιτύσειν τέκνα.
 καὶγὼ τ' ἂν ἔζων καὶ σὺ τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον,
 κοῦκ ἂν μονωθεῖς σῆς δάμαρτος ἔστενες
 καὶ παῖδας ὠρφάνευσες. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν
 θεῶν τις ἐξέπραξεν ὥσθ' οὕτως ἔχειν.
 εἰεν· σὺ νῦν μοι τῶνδ' ἀπόμνησαι χάριν·
 300 αἰτήσομαι γάρ σ' ἀξίαν μὲν οὔποτε·
 ψυχῆς γὰρ οὐδέν ἐστι τιμώτερον·
 δίκαια δ', ὡς φήσεις σύ· τοῦσδε γὰρ φιλεῖς
 οὐχ ἦσσον ἢ ἡγὼ παῖδας, εἶπερ εὖ φρονεῖς·
 τοῦτους ἀνάσχου δεσπότης ἐμῶν δόμων,
 καὶ μὴ ἑπιγῆμης τοῖσδε μητρυιὰν τέκνοις,
 ἧτις κακίων οὐς' ἐμοῦ γυνὴ φθόνῳ
 τοῖς σοῖσι κάμοις παισὶ χεῖρα προσβαλεῖ.
 μὴ δῆτα δράσης ταῦτά γ', αἰτοῦμαί σ' ἐγώ.
 310 ἐχθρὰ γὰρ ἢ ἑπιούσα μητρυιὰ τέκνοις
 τοῖς πρόσθ', ἐχίδνης οὐδὲν ἡπιωτέρα.
 καὶ παῖς μὲν ἄρσην πατέρ' ἔχει πύργον μέγαν,
 ὃν καὶ προσεῖπε καὶ προσερρήθη πάλιν·
 σὺ δ', ὦ τέκνον μοι, πῶς κορευθήσῃ καλῶς ;
 ποίας τυχοῦσα συζύγου τῷ σῷ πατρί ;
 μή σοί τιν' αἰσχροὴν προσβαλοῦσα κληδόνα
 ἡβης ἐν ἀκμῇ σοὺς διαφθείρῃ γάμους.
 οὐ γάρ σε μήτηρ οὔτε νυμφεύσει ποτὲ
 οὔτ' ἐν τόκοισι τοῖσι σοῖσι θαρσυνεῖ

ALCESTIS

Yet would not live on, torn away from thee,
 With orphaned children : wherefore spared I not
 The gifts of youth still mine, wherein I joyed.
 Yet she that bare, he that begat, forsook thee, • 290
 Though fair for death their time of life was come;
 Yea, fair, to save their son and die renowned.
 Their only one wert thou : no hope there was
 To get them sons thereafter, hadst thou died.
 So had I lived, and thou, to after days :
 Thou wert not groaning, of thy wife bereaved,
 Thy children motherless. Howbeit this
 Some God hath brought to pass : it was to be.
 So be it. Remember thou what thank is due
 For this,—I never can ask full requital ; 300
 For naught there is more precious than the life,—
 And justly due ; for these thy babes thou lovest
 No less than I, if that thine heart be right.

Suffer that they have lordship in mine home :
 Wed not a stepdame to supplant our babes,
 Whose heart shall tell her she is no Alcestis,
 Whose jealous hand shall smite them, thine and
 mine.

Do not, ah, do not this—I pray thee, I !
 For the new stepdame hateth still the babes
 Of her that's gone with more than viper-venom. 310
 The boy—his father is his tower of strength
 To whom to speak, of whom to win reply ;
 But, O my child, what girlhood will be thine ?
 To thee what would she be, thy father's yoke-mate ?
 What if with ill report she smirched thy name,
 And in thy youth's flower marred thy marriage-
 hopes ?

For thee thy mother ne'er shall deck for bridal,
 Nor hearten thee in travail, O my child,

320 παροῦς', ἵν' οὐδὲν μητρὸς εὐμενέστερον.
 δεῖ γὰρ θανεῖν με· καὶ τόδ' οὐκ ἐς αὔριον
 οὐδ' εἰς τρίτην μοι μηνὸς ἔρχεται κακόν,
 ἀλλ' αὐτίκ' ἐν τοῖς μηκέτ' οὔσι λέξομαι.
 χαίροντες εὐφραίνοισθε· καὶ σοὶ μέν, πόσι,
 γυναῖκ' ἀρίστην ἔστι κομπάσαι λαβεῖν,
 ὑμῖν δέ, παῖδες, μητρὸς ἐκπεφυκέναι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

θάρσει· πρὸ τούτου γὰρ λέγειν οὐχ ἄξομαι·
 δράσει τάδ', εἴπερ μὴ φρενῶν ἀμαρτάνει.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

330 ἔσται τάδ' ἔσται, μὴ τρέσης· ἐπεὶ σ' ἐγὼ
 καὶ ζῶσαν εἶχον καὶ θανοῦσ' ἐμὴ γυνή
 μόνη κεκλήσει, κοῦτις ἀντὶ σοῦ ποτε
 τόνδ' ἄνδρα νύμφη Θεσσαλὶς προσφθέγγεται.
 οὐκ ἔστιν οὕτως οὔτε πατρὸς εὐγενούς
 οὔτ' εἶδος ἄλλως ἐκπρεπεστάτη γυνή.
 ἄλλῃ δὲ παίδων, τῶνδ' ὄνησιν εὐχομαι
 θεοῖς γενέσθαι· σοῦ γὰρ οὐκ ὠνήμεθα.
 οἶσω δὲ πένθος οὐκ ἐτήσιον τὸ σόν,
 ἀλλ' ἔστ' ἂν αἰὼν οὐμὸς ἀντέχη, γύναι,
 στυγῶν μὲν ἢ μ' ἔτικτεν, ἐχθαίρων δ' ἐμὸν
 πατέρα· λόγῳ γὰρ ἦσαν οὐκ ἔργῳ φίλοι.
 340 σὺ δ' ἀντιδοῦσα τῆς ἐμῆς τὰ φίλτατα
 ψυχῆς ἔσωσας. ἄρά μοι στένειν πάρα
 τοιαῦσδ' ἀμαρτάνοντι συζύγου σέθεν;
 παύσω δὲ κώμους συμποτῶν θ' ὁμιλίας
 στεφάνους τε μοῦσάν θ' ἢ κατεῖχ' ἐμοὺς δόμους.
 οὐ γάρ ποτ' οὔτ' ἂν βαρβίτου θίγοιμ' ἔτι
 οὔτ' ἂν φρέν' ἐξαίροιμι πρὸς Δίβυν λακεῖν
 αὐλόν· σὺ γάρ μου τέρψιν ἐξείλου βίου.
 σοφῇ δὲ χειρὶ τεκτόνων δέμας τὸ σόν

ALCESTIS

There, where naught gentler than the mother is.
For I must die ; nor shall it be to-morn, 320
Nor on the third day comes on me this doom :
Straightway of them that are not shall I be.
Farewell, be happy. Now for thee, my lord,
Abides the boast to have won the noblest wife,
For you, my babes, to have sprung from noblest
mother.

CHORUS

Fear not ; for I am bold to speak for him :
This will he do, an if he be not mad.

ADMETUS

It shall, it shall be, fear not : thou alone
Living wast mine ; and dead, mine only wife 330
Shalt thou be called : nor ever in thy stead
Shall bride Thessalian hail me as her lord.
None is there of a father so high-born,
None so for beauty peerless among women.
Children enough have I : I pray the Gods
For joy in these—lost is our joy in thee !
Not for a year's space will I mourn for thee,
But long as this my life shall last, dear wife,
Loathing my mother, hating mine own sire, 340
For in word only, not in deed, they loved me.
Thou gav'st in ransom for my life thine all
Of precious, and didst save. Do I not well
To groan, who lose such yokefellow in thee ?
Revels shall cease, and gatherings at the wine,
Garlands, and song, which wont to fill mine house.
No, never more mine hand shall touch the lyre :
Nor will I lift up heart to sing to flute
Of Libya : stolen is life's joy with thee.
Fashioned by craftsmen's cunning hands, thy form

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

350 εἰκασθὲν ἐν λέκτροισιν ἐκταθήσεται,
 ᾧ προσπεσοῦμαι καὶ περιπτύσσων χέρας
 ὄνομα καλῶν σὸν τὴν φίλην ἐν ἀγκάλαις
 δόξω γυναῖκα καίπερ οὐκ ἔχων ἔχειν,
 ψυχρὰν μὲν, οἶμαι, τέρψιν, ἀλλ' ὅμως βάρος
 ψυχῆς ἀπαντλοῖν ἄν· ἐν δ' ὀνειράσι
 φοιτῶσά μ' εὐφραίνοις ἄν· ἡδὺ γὰρ φίλους
 κὰν νυκτὶ λεύσσειν, ὄντιν ἄν παρῇ χρόνον.
 εἰ δ' Ὀρφέως μοι γλῶσσα καὶ μέλος παρῇν,
 ὥστ' ἡ κόρην Δήμητρος ἢ κείνης πόσιν
 ὕμνοισι κηλήσαντά σ' ἐξ Ἄιδου λαβεῖν,
 360 κατήλθον ἄν, καὶ μ' οὔθ' ὁ Πλούτωνος κύων
 οὔθ' οὐπὶ κώπῃ ψυχοπομπὸς ἄν Χάρων
 ἔσχον, πρὶν εἰς φῶς σὸν καταστήσαι βίον.
 ἀλλ' οὖν ἐκείσε προσδόκα μ', ὅταν θάνω,
 καὶ δῶμ' ἐτοίμαζ', ὥς συνοικήσουσά μοι.
 ἐν ταῖσιν αὐταῖς γάρ μ' ἐπισκήψω κέδροις
 σοὶ τούσδε θεῖναι πλευρά τ' ἐκτεῖναι πέλας
 πλευροῖσι τοῖς σοῖς· μηδὲ γὰρ θανὼν ποτε
 σοῦ χωρὶς εἶην τῆς μόνης πιστῆς ἐμοί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

370 καὶ μὴν ἐγὼ σοι πένθος ὥς φίλος φίλῳ
 λυπρὸν συνοίσω τῆσδε· καὶ γὰρ ἀξία.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ὦ παῖδες, αὐτοὶ δὴ τάδ' εἰσηκούσατε
 πατρὸς λέγοντος μὴ γαμεῖν ἄλλην τινὰ
 γυναῖκ' ἐφ' ὑμῖν μηδ' ἀτιμάσειν ἐμέ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

καὶ νῦν γέ φημι, καὶ τελευτήσω τάδε.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ἐπὶ τοῖσδε παῖδας χειρὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς δέχου.

ALCESTIS

Imaged, shall lie as sleeping on a bed,
Falling whereon, and clasping with mine hands, 350
Calling thy name, in fancy shall mine arms
Hold my belovèd, though I hold her not :—
A drear delight, I wot : yet shall I lift
The burden from my soul. In dreams shalt thou
Haunt me and gladden : sweet to see the loved,
Though but as fleeting phantoms of the night.

But, were the tongue and strain of Orpheus mine,
To witch Demeter's Daughter and her lord,
And out of Hades by my song to win thee,
I had fared down ; nor Pluto's Hound had stayed 360
me,

Nor Spirit-wafter Charon at the oar,
Or ever I restored thy life to light.
Yet there look thou for me, whenso I die :
Prepare a home, as who shall dwell with me.
For in the selfsame cedar chest, wherein
Thou liest, will I bid them lay my bones
At thy side : never, not in death, from thee,
My one true loyal love, may I be sundered !

CHORUS

Yea, I withal will mourn, as friend with friend,
With thee for this thy wife, for she is worthy. 370

ALCESTIS

My children, ye yourselves have heard all this,
Have heard your father pledge him ne'er to wed
For your oppression and for my dishonour.

ADMETUS

Yea, now I say it, and I will perform.

ALCESTIS

On these terms take the children from mine hand.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

δέχομαι φίλον γε δῶρον ἐκ φίλης χερός.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

σὺ νῦν γενοῦ τοῖσδ' ἀντ' ἐμοῦ μήτηρ τέκνοις.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

πολλή μ' ἀνάγκη, σοῦ γ' ἀπεστερημένοις.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ὦ τέκν', ὅτε ζῆν χρῆν μ', ἀπέρχομαι κάτω.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

380 οἴμοι, τί δράσω δῆτα σοῦ μονούμενος ;

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

χρόνος μαλάξει σ'. οὐδέν ἐσθ' ὁ κατθανών.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἄγου με σὺν σοί, πρὸς θεῶν, ἄγου κάτω.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ἀρκοῦμεν ἡμεῖς οἱ προθυήσκοντες σέθεν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὦ δαῖμον, οἷας συζύγου μ' ἀποστερεῖς.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

καὶ μὴν σκοτεινὸν ὄμμα μου βαρύνεται.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἀπωλόμην ἄρ', εἴ με δὴ λείψεις, γύναι.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ὥς οὐκέτ' οὔσαν οὐδέν ἂν λέγοις ἐμέ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὄρθου πρόσωπον, μὴ λίπης παῖδας σέθεν.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

οὐ δῆθ' ἐκούσά γ', ἀλλὰ χαίρειτ', ὦ τέκνα.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

βλέψον πρὸς αὐτοὺς βλέψον.

ALCESTIS

ADMETUS

I take them—precious gift from precious hand.

ALCESTIS

Thou in my stead be a mother now to these.

ADMETUS

I must, I must—they are bereft of thee !

ALCESTIS

Darlings, when most I need to live, I die.

ADMETUS

Ah me !—what shall I do, forlorn of thee ? 380

ALCESTIS

Thy wound shall time heal :—nothingness are the
dead.

ADMETUS

Take me, ah take me with thee to the grave !

ALCESTIS

Suffice it that one dies—she dies for thee.

ADMETUS

O Fate, of what a wife dost thou bereave me !

ALCESTIS

Dark—dark—mine eyes are drooping, heavy-laden.

ADMETUS

Oh, I am lost if thou wilt leave me, wife !

ALCESTIS

No more—I am no more : as naught account me.

ADMETUS

Uplift thy face : forsake not thine own children !

ALCESTIS

Sore loth do I—yet O farewell, my babes !

ADMETUS

Look on them—look !

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

390

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

οὐδέν εἰμ' ἔτι.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

τί δράς ; προλείπεις ;

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

χαῖρ'.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἀπωλόμην τάλας.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βέβηκεν, οὐκέτ' ἔστιν Ἀδμήτου γυνή.

ΕΥΜΗΛΟΣ

ἰὼ μοι τύχας. μαῖα δὴ κάτω

στρ.

βέβακεν, οὐκέτ' ἔστιν, ὦ

πάτερ, ὑφ' ἀλίφ.

προλιπούσα δ' ἄμὸν βίον

ὠρφάνισεν τλάμων.

ἶδε γὰρ ἶδε βλέφαρον

καὶ παρατόνους χέρας.

400

ὑπάκουσον ἄκουσον, ὦ μᾶτερ, ἀντιάξω

σ' ἐγώ, μᾶτερ, ἐγὼ

* * καλοῦμαί σ' ὁ

σὸς ποτὶ σοῖσι πίντων στόμασιν νεοσσός.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

τὴν οὐ κλύουσαν οὐδ' ὀρώσαν· ὥστ' ἐγὼ

καὶ σφὼ βαρεῖα συμφορᾷ πεπλήγμεθα.

ΕΥΜΗΛΟΣ

νέος ἐγώ, πάτερ, λείπομαι φίλας

ἀντ.

μονόστολός τε ματρός· ὦ

σχέτλια δὴ παθὼν

438

ALCESTIS

ALCESTIS

Nothing am I henceforth. 390

ADMETUS

Ah, leav'st thou us ?

ALCESTIS

Farewell. [Dies.

ADMETUS

O wretch undone !

CHORUS

Gone,—gone! No more she lives, Admetus' wife !

EUMELUS

(Str.)

Woe for my lot!—to the tomb hath my mother descended, descended ! [the sun

Never again, O my father, she seeth the light of
In anguish she leaves us forsaken : the story is
ended, is ended, [motherless life is begun.

Of her sheltering love, and the tale of the
Look—look on her eyelids, her hands drooping nerveless ! O hear me, O hear me ! 400

It is I—I beseech thee, my mother!—thine own
little, own little bird ! [me, so near me ;
It is I—O, I cast me upon thee—thy lips are so near
Unto mine am I pressing them, mother!—I plead
for a word—but a word !

ADMETUS

With her who heareth not, nor seeth : ye
And I are stricken with a heavy doom.

EUMELUS

(Ant.)

And I am but a little one, father—so young, and forsaken, forsaken, [shall be mine !
Forlorn of my mother—O hapless ! a weariful lot

439

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

410

ἐγὼ ἔργα * * σύ τε,
 σύγκασι μοι κούρα,
 * * * * * συνέτλας·
 * * * * * ὦ πάτερ.
 ἀνόνατ' ἀνόνατ' ἐνύμφευσας, οὐδὲ γήρως
 ἔβας τέλος σὺν τᾷδ'·
 ἔφθιτο γὰρ πάρος,
 οἰχομένης δὲ σοῦ, μᾶτερ, ὄλωλεν οἶκος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ἄδμητ', ἀνάγκη τάσδε συμφορὰς φέρειν·
 οὐ γάρ τι πρῶτος οὐδὲ λοίσθιος βροτῶν
 γυναικὸς ἐσθλῆς ἤμπλακες· γίγνωσκε δὲ
 ὥς πᾶσιν ἡμῖν κατθανεῖν ὀφείλεται.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

420

ἐπίσταμαί γε, κοῦκ ἄφνω κακὸν τόδε
 προσέπτατ'· εἰδὼς δ' αὖτ' ἐτειρόμην πάλαι.
 ἀλλ', ἐκφορὰν γὰρ τοῦδε θήσομαι νεκροῦ,
 πάρεστε καὶ μένοντες ἀντηχήσατε
 παιᾶνα τῷ κάτωθεν ἀσπόνδῳ θεῷ.
 πᾶσιν δὲ Θεσσαλοῖσιν ὧν ἐγὼ κρατῶ
 πένθους γυναικὸς τῆσδε κοινοῦσθαι λέγω
 κουρᾷ ξυρήκει καὶ μελαμπέπλῳ στολῇ.
 τέθριππά θ' οἷ ζεύγνυσθε καὶ μονάμπυκας
 πώλους, σιδήρῳ τέμνεται αὐχένων φόβην.
 430 αὐλῶν δὲ μὴ κατ' ἄστυ, μὴ λύρας κτύπος
 ἔστω σελήνας δώδεκ' ἐκπληρουμένης·
 οὐ γάρ τιν' ἄλλον φίλτερον θάψω νεκρὸν
 τοῦδ' οὐδ' ἀμείνον' εἰς ἔμ'· ἀξία δέ μοι
 τιμῆς, ἐπεὶ τέθνηκεν αὐτ' ἐμοῦ μόνη.

440

ALCESTIS

And thou, little maiden, my sister, the burden hast
taken, hast taken,
Which thy brother may bear not alone, and a
weariful lot shall be thine. 410
O father, of long-living love was thy marriage un-
cherished, uncherished :
Thou hast won not the goal of old age with the
love of thy youth at thy side ;
For, or ever she came to the fulness of days, she hath
perished, hath perished ;
And the home is a wreck and a ruin, for thou, O my
mother, hast died !

CHORUS

Admetus, this affliction must thou bear.
Not first of mortals thou, nor thou the last
Hast lost a noble wife ; and, be thou sure,
From us, from all, this debt is due—to die.

ADMETUS

I know it : nowise unforeseen this ill 420
Hath swooped on me : long anguished I foreknew it.
But—for to burial must I bear my dead—
Stay ye, and, tarrying, echo back my wail
To that dark God whom no drink-offerings move.
And all Thessalians over whom I rule
I bid take part in mourning for this woman
With shaven head and sable-shrouding robe.
And ye which yoke the cars four-horsed, or steeds
Of single frontlet, shear with steel their manes.
Music of flutes the city through, or lyres, 430
Be none, while twelve moons round their circles out :
For dearer dead, or kinder unto me
I shall not bury : worthy of mine honour
Is she, for she alone hath died for me.

[Exit with attendants bearing in the corpse.]

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

- ὦ Πελίου θύγατερ, στρ. α'
 χαίρουσά μοι εἰν Ἀίδα δόμοισιν
 τὸν ἀνάλιον οἶκον οἰκετεύοις.
 ἴστω δ' Ἀίδας ὁ μελαγχαίτας θεὸς ὃς τ' ἐπὶ κώπα
 440 πηδαλίῳ τε γέρων
 νεκροπομπὸς ἵζει,
 πολὺν δὴ πολὺν δὴ γυναῖκ' ἀρίσταν
 λίμναν Ἀχεροντίαν πορεύ-
 σας ἐλάτα δικώπῳ.
- πολλά σε μουσοπόλοι ἀντ. α'
 μέλψουσι καθ' ἐπτάτονόν τ' ὀρέϊαν
 χέλυν ἔν τ' ἀλύροις κλέοντες ὕμνοις,
 Σπάρτα κύκλος ἀνίκα Καρνείου περινίσσεται ὥρας
 450 μηνος, ἀειρομένας
 παννύχον σελάνας,
 λιπαραῖσί τ' ἐν ὀλβίαις Ἀθάναις.
 τοίαν ἔλιπες θανοῦσα μολ-
 πὰν μελέων ἀοιδοῖς.
- εἴθ' ἐπ' ἐμοὶ μὲν εἴη, στρ. β'
 δυναίμαν δέ σε πέμψαι
 φάος ἐξ Ἀίδα τεράμνων
 Κωκυτοῦ τε ῥεέθρων
 ποταμία νερτέρᾳ τε κώπα.
 46 σὺ γάρ, ὦ μόνα, ὦ φίλα γυναικῶν,
 σὺ τὸν αὐτὰς
 ἔτλας πόσιν ἀντὶ σᾶς ἀμείψαι
 ψυχᾶς ἐξ Ἀίδα. κούφα σοι
 χθῶν ἐπάνωθε πέσοι, γύναι. εἰ δέ τι
 καινὸν ἔλοιτο λέχος πόσις, ἧ μάλ' ἂν ἔμοιγ' ἂν εἴη
 στυγηθεὶς τέκνοις τε τοῖς σοῖς.

ALCESTIS

CHORUS

O Pelias' daughter, I hail thee : (Str. 1)

I wave thee eternal farewell

To thine home where the darkness must veil thee,

Where in Hades unsunned thou shalt dwell.

Know, Dark-haired, thy grey Spirit-wafter

Hath sped not with twy-plashing oar 440

Woman nobler, nor shall speed hereafter

To Acheron's shore.

For the seven-stringed shell, or for pæan (Ant. 1)

Unharp'd, shall thy fame be a song,

When o'er Sparta the moon Carnean

High rideth the whole night long. 450

And in Athens the wealthy and splendid

Shall thy name on her bards' lips ring ;

Such a theme hast thou left to be blended

With the lays that they sing.

O that the power were but in me, (Str. 2)

From the chambers of Hades, to light,

And from streams of Cocytus, to win thee

With the oar of the River of Night !

O dear among women, strong-hearted 460

From Hades to ransom thy lord !

Never spirit in such wise departed.

Light lie on thee, Lady, the sword !

And, if ever thine husband shall mate him

Again with a bride in thy stead,

I will loathe him, his children shall hate him,

The babes of the dead.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ματέρος οὐ θελούσας
πρὸ παιδὸς χθονὶ κρύψαι
δέμας, οὐδὲ πατρὸς γεραιοῦ,

ἀντ. β'

* * * * *

ὄν ἔτεκον δ', οὐκ ἔτλαν ῥύεσθαι
470 σχετλίω, πολὺν ἔχοντε χαίταν.
σὺ δ' ἐν ἡβᾷ

νέα προθανοῦσα φωτὸς οἶχει.
τοιαύτης εἶη μοι κῦρσαι
συνδυάδος φιλίας ἀλόχου· τοῦτο γὰρ
ἐν βίῳ σπάνιον μέρος· ἡ γὰρ ἂν ἐμοίγ' ἄλυπος
δι' αἰῶνος ἂν ξυνείη.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ξένοι, Φεραίας τῆσδε κωμῆται χθονός,
Ἄδμητον ἐν δόμοισιν ἄρα κιγχάνω ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἔστ' ἐν δόμοισι παῖς Φέρητος, Ἡράκλεις.
ἀλλ' εἰπὲ χρεῖα τίς σε Θεσσαλῶν χθόνα
480 πέμπει, Φεραῖον ἄστυ προσβῆναι τόδε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Τιρυνθίῳ πράσσω τίν' Εὐρυσθεῖ πόνον.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ ποῖ πορεύει ; τῷ προσέξενξαι πλάνῳ ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

Θρηκὸς τέτρωρον ἄρμα Διομήδους μέτα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς οὖν δυνήσει ; μὼν ἄπειρος εἰ ξένου ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄπειρος· οὐπω Βιστόνων ἦλθον χθόνα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστιν ἵππων δεσπόσαι σ' ἄνευ μάχης.

ALCESTIS

When his mother would not be contented (*Ant.* 2)
To hide her for him in the tomb,
Nor his grey-haired father consented,
Unholpen he looked on his doom. [not,
Whom they bare—the hard-hearted!—they cared
Though hoary their locks were, to save! 470
Thou art gone, for thy great love spared not
Thy blossom of youth from the grave.
Ah, may it be mine, such communion
Of hearts!—'tis vouchsafed unto few:—
Then ours should be sorrowless union
Our life-days through.

Enter HERCULES.

HERCULES

Strangers, who dwell in this Pheraean land,
Say, do I find Admetus in his home?

CHORUS

Hercules, in his home is Pheres' son.
Yet say, what brings thee to Thessalian land,
That thou shouldst come to this Pheraean town? 480

HERCULES

A toil for King Eurystheus, lord of Tiryns.

CHORUS

And whither journeyest? To what wanderings
yoked?

HERCULES

For Thracian Diomedes' four-horsed car.

CHORUS

How canst thou? Sure he is unknown to thee!

HERCULES

Unknown: Bistonian land I never saw.

CHORUS

Not save by battle may those steeds be won.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἀπειπεῖν τοὺς πόνους οἷόν τ' ἐμοί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

κτανὼν ἄρ' ἤξεις ἢ θανὼν αὐτοῦ μενεῖς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ τόνδ' ἀγῶνα πρῶτον ἂν δράμοιμ' ἐγώ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

490 τί δ' ἂν κρατήσας δεσπότην πλέον λάβοις ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πώλους ἀπάξω κοιράνῳ Τιρυνθίῳ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

οὐκ εὐμαρὲς χαλινὸν ἐμβαλεῖν γνάθοις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰ μή γε πῦρ πνέουσι μυκτῆρων ἄπο.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἄνδρας ἀρταμοῦσι λαιψηραῖς γνάθοις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

θηρῶν ὀρείων χόρτον, οὐχ ἵππων λέγεις.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

φάτνας ἴδοις ἂν αἵμασιν πεφυρμένας.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τίνος δ' ὁ θρέψας παῖς πατρός κομπάζεται ;

ΧΟΡΟΣ

Ἄρεος, ζαχρύσου Θρηκίας πέλτης ἄναξ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

500 καὶ τόνδε τοῦμοῦ δαίμονος πόνον λέγεις,
σκληρὸς γὰρ αἰεὶ καὶ πρὸς αἶπος ἔρχεται,
εἰ χρή με παισὶν οὖς Ἄρης ἐγένετο
μάχην συνάψαι, πρῶτα μὲν Λυκάονι,
αὐτῷ δὲ Κύκνῳ, τόνδε δ' ἔρχομαι τρίτον
ἀγῶνα πώλοις δεσπότη τε συμβαλῶν.

ALCESTIS

HERCULES

Yet flinch I may not from the appointed toils.

CHORUS

Thy life or his—a triumph or a grave.

HERCULES

Not this the first time I have run such course.

CHORUS

What profit is it if thou slay their lord?

490

HERCULES

Those steeds shall I drive back to Tiryns' king.

CHORUS

Hard task, to set the bit betwixt their jaws.

HERCULES

That shall I, if their nostrils breathe not fire.

CHORUS

Yea, but with ravening jaws do they rend men.

HERCULES

Go to—thus mountain-wolves, not horses, feast.

CHORUS

Nay, thou canst see their cribs besprent with gore.

HERCULES

Whom boasteth he for father, he that reared them?

CHORUS

Ares, the lord of Thracia's golden shields.

HERCULES

Thou say'st: such toil my fate imposeth still,

Harsh evermore, uphillward straining aye,

500

If I must still in battle close with sons

Gotten of Ares; with Lycaon first,

And Cynus then; and lo, I come to grapple—

The third strife this—with yon steeds and their lord.

447

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ἀλλ' οὔτις ἔστιν ὃς τὸν Ἀλκμήνης γόνον
τρέσαντα χεῖρα πολεμίαν ποτ' ὄψεται.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὃδ' αὐτὸς τῇσδε κοίρανος χθονὸς
Ἄδμητος ἔξω δωμάτων πορεύεται.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

χαῖρ', ὦ Διὸς παῖ Περσέως τ' ἀφ' αἵματος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

510 Ἄδμητε, καὶ σὺ χαῖρε, Θεσσαλῶν ἄναξ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

θέλοιμ' ἄν' εὖνουν δ' ὄντα σ' ἐξεπίσταμαι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί χρήμα κουρᾷ τῇδε πενθίμῳ πρέπεις;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

θάπτειν τιν' ἐν τῇδ' ἡμέρᾳ μέλλω νεκρόν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀπ' οὖν τέκνων σὼν πημονὴν εἶργοι θεός.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ζῶσιν κατ' οἴκους παῖδες οὓς ἔφυσ' ἐγώ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πατήρ γε μὴν ὠραῖος, εἶπερ οἷχεται.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

κάκεινος ἔστι χῆ τεκούσά μ', Ἡράκλεις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ μὴν γυνή γ' ὄλωλεν Ἄλκηστις σέθεν;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

διπλοῦς ἐπ' αὐτῇ μῦθος ἔστι μοι λέγειν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

520 πότερα θανούσης εἶπας ἢ ζώσης πέρι;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἔστιν τε κούκέτ' ἔστιν, ἀλγύνει δέ με.

ALCESTIS

But the man lives not who shall ever see
Alcmena's son flinch from a foeman's hand.

CHORUS

Lo, there himself, the ruler of the realm,
Admetus, cometh forth his palace-hall.

Enter ADMETUS.

ADMETUS

Joy to thee, sprung from Zeus' and Perseus' blood !

HERCULES

Admetus, joy to thee, Thessalia's king ! 510

ADMETUS (*aside*)

Joy ?—would 'twere mine ! (aloud) Thanks !—thy
good heart I know.

HERCULES

Wherefore for mourning shaven show'st thou thus ?

ADMETUS

This day must I commit to earth a corpse.

HERCULES

Now heaven forbend thou mourn'st for children dead !

ADMETUS

In mine home live the babes whom I begat.

HERCULES

Sooth, death-ripe were thy sire, if he be gone.

ADMETUS

He liveth, and my mother, Hercules.

HERCULES

Surely, O surely, not thy wife, Admetus ?

ADMETUS

Twofold must be mine answer touching her.

HERCULES

Or hath she died, say'st thou, or liveth yet ? 520

ADMETUS

She is, and she is not : here lies my grief.

449

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐδέν τι μάλλον οἶδ' ἄσημα γὰρ λέγεις.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οὐκ οἶσθα μοίρας ἧς τυχεῖν αὐτὴν χρεών;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οἶδ' ἀντὶ σοῦ γε κατθανεῖν ὑφειμένην.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

πῶς οὖν ἔτ' ἔστιν, εἴπερ ἦνεσεν τάδε;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἂ, μὴ πρόκλαι' ἄκοιτιν, εἰς τόδ' ἀμβαλοῦ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

τέθνηχ' ὁ μέλλων, κούκέτ' ἔσθ' ὁ κατθανών.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

χωρὶς τό τ' εἶναι καὶ τὸ μὴ νομίζεται.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

σὺ τῇδε κρίνεις, Ἡράκλεις, κείνη δ' ἐγώ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

530 τί δῆτα κλαίεις; τίς φίλων ὁ κατθανών;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

γυνή· γυναικὸς ἀρτίως μεμνήμεθα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὀθνεῖος ἦ σοὶ συγγενῆς γεγῶσά τις;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὀθνεῖος, ἄλλως δ' ἦν ἀναγκαία δόμοις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πῶς οὖν ἐν οἴκοις σοῖσιν ὤλεσεν βίον;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

πατρὸς θανόντος ἐνθάδ' ὠρφανεύετο.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

φεῦ.

εἴθ' ἡϋρομέν σ', Ἀδμητε, μὴ λυπούμενον.

ALCESTIS

HERCULES

Nothing the more I know : dark sayings thine.

ADMETUS

Know'st not the fate to which she is foredoomed ?

HERCULES

I know she pledged herself to die for thee.

ADMETUS

How lives she then, if she to this consented ?

HERCULES

Mourn not thy wife ere dead : abide the hour.

ADMETUS

One doomed is dead ; the dead hath ceased to be.

HERCULES

Diverse are these—to be and not to be.

ADMETUS

This, Hercules, thy sentence : that is mine.

HERCULES

But now, why weep'st thou ? What dear friend is
dead ?

530

ADMETUS

A woman—hers the memory we mourn.

HERCULES

Some stranger born, or nigh of kin to thee ?

ADMETUS

A stranger born : yet near and dear to us.

HERCULES

How died a stranger then in house of thine ?

ADMETUS

An orphan here she dwelt, her father dead.

HERCULES

Would I had found thee mourning not, Admetus.

451

G G 2

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὥς δὴ τί δράσων τόνδ' ὑπορράπτεις λόγον ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ξένων πρὸς ἄλλων ἐστίαν πορεύσομαι.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστιν, ὦναξ· μὴ τοσόνδ' ἔλθοι κακόν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

540 λυπουμενοῖς ὀχληρὸς, εἰ μόλοι, ξένος.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

τεθνᾶσιν οἱ θανόντες· ἀλλ' ἴθ' εἰς δόμους.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

αἰσχρὸν παρὰ κλαίουσι θοινᾶσθαι φίλοις.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

χωρὶς ξενῶνές εἰσιν οἱ σ' ἐσάξομεν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μέθεσ με, καί σοι μυρίαν ἔξω χάριν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλου σ' ἀνδρὸς ἐστίαν μολεῖν.

ἡγοῦ σὺ τῷδε δωμάτων ἐξωπίους

ξενῶνας οἷξας, τοῖς τ' ἐφεστῶσιν φράσον

σίτων παρεῖναι πλήθος· ἐν δὲ κλήσατε

θύρας μεσαύλους· οὐ πρέπει θοινωμένους

550 κλύειν στεναγμῶν οὐδὲ λυπεῖσθαι ξένους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τί δρᾶς ; τοιαύτης συμφορᾶς προσκειμένης,

Ἄδμητε, τολμᾶς ξενοδοκεῖν ; τί μῶρος εἰ ;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἀλλ' εἰ δόμων σφε καὶ πόλεως ἀπήλασα

ξένον μολόντα, μᾶλλον ἂν μ' ἐπήνεσας ;

οὐ δῆτ', ἐπεὶ μοι συμφορὰ μὲν οὐδὲν ἂν

μείων ἐγίγνεται, ἀξενώτερος δ' ἐγώ.

ALCESTIS

ADMETUS

Ay so?—what purpose lurketh 'neath thy word?

HERCULES

On will I to another host's hearth-welcome.

ADMETUS

It cannot be : may no such grief befall !

HERCULES

A burden unto mourners comes the guest.

540

ADMETUS

Dead are the dead :—but enter thou mine house.

HERCULES

'Twere shame to banquet in the house of weeping.

ADMETUS

Aloof the guest-halls are where we will lodge thee.

HERCULES

Let me pass on : so earn my thanks untold.

ADMETUS

Unto another's hearth thou canst not go.

[*To an attendant*] Ho thou, lead on : open the guest-halls looking

Away from these our chambers. Tell my stewards

To set on meat in plenty. Shut withal

The mid-court doors : it fits not that the guests,

The while they feast, hear wailings, and be vexed.

550

[*Exit* HERCULES.]

CHORUS

What dost thou?—such affliction at the door,

And guests for thee, Admetus? Art thou mad?

ADMETUS

But had I driven him from my home and city

Who came my guest, then hadst thou praised me more?

Nay, verily : mine affliction so had grown

No less, and more inhospitable were I !

453

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

καὶ πρὸς κακοῖσιν ἄλλο τοῦτ' ἂν ἦν κακόν,
 δόμους καλεῖσθαι τοὺς ἐμοὺς κακοξένους.
 αὐτὸς δ' ἥριστου τοῦδε τυγχάνω ξένου,
 560 ὅταν ποτ' Ἄργους διψίαν ἔλθω χθόνα.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πῶς οὖν ἔκρυπτες τὸν παρόντα δαίμονα,
 φίλου μολόντος ἀνδρός, ὥς αὐτὸς λέγεις ;

ἈΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν ποτ' ἠθέλησεν εἰσελθεῖν δόμους,
 εἰ τῶν ἐμῶν τι πημάτων ἐγνώρισε.
 καὶ τῷ μέν, οἶμαι, δρῶν τάδ' οὐ φρονεῖν δοκῶ,
 οὐδ' αἰνέσει με· τὰμὰ δ' οὐκ ἐπίσταται
 μέλαθρ' ἀπωθεῖν οὐδ' ἀτιμάζειν ξένους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ὦ πολύξεινος καὶ ἐλεύθερος ἀνδρὸς αἰεί ποτ' οἶκος, στρ. α'
 σέ τοι καὶ ὁ Πύθιος εὐλύρας Ἀπόλλων
 570 ἠξίωσε ναίειν,
 ἔτλα δὲ σοῖσι μηλονόμας
 ἐν δόμοις γενέσθαι,
 δοχμῶν διὰ κλιτύων
 βοσκήμασι σοῖσι συρίζων
 ποιμνίτας ὑμεναίους.

σὺν δ' ἐποιμαίνοντο χαρᾷ μελέων βαλῖαί τε λύγκες, ἀντ. α'
 ἔβα δὲ λιποῦσ' Ὀθρυος νάπαν λεόντων
 580 ἡ δαφνοῖς ἴλα·
 χόρευσε δ' ἀμφὶ σὰν κιθάραν,
 Φοῖβε, ποικιλόθριξ
 νεβρὸς ὑψικόμων πέραν
 βαίνουσ' ἐλατᾶν σφυρῷ κούφῳ,
 χαίρουσ' εὐφροني μολπᾷ.

ALCESTIS

And to mine ills were added this beside,
That this my home were called "Guest-hating Hall."
Yea, and myself have proved him kindest host
Whene'er to Argos' thirsty plain I fared.

560

CHORUS

Why hide then the dread Presence in the house,
When came a friend? Thyself hast named him friend.

ADMETUS

Never had he been won to pass my doors,
Had he one whit of mine afflictions known.
To some, I wot, not wise herein I seem,
Nor will such praise: but mine halls have not learnt
To thrust away nor to dishonour guests.

CHORUS

Halls thronged of the guests ever welcome, O
dwelling

(*Str.* 1)

Of a hero, for ever the home of the free,
The Lord of the lyre-strings sweet beyond telling,
Apollo, hath deigned to sojourn in thee.
Amid thine habitations, a shepherd of sheep,
The flocks of Admetus he scorned not to keep,
While the shepherds' bridal-strains, soft-swelling
From his pipe, pealed over the slant-sloped lea.

570

(*Ant.* 1)

And the spotted lynxes for joy of thy singing
Mixed with thy flocks; and from Othrys' dell
Trooped tawny lions: the witchery-winging
Notes brought dancing around thy shell,
Phoebus, the dappled fawn from the shadow
Of the tall-tressed pines tripping forth to the meadow,
Beating time to the chime of the rapture-ringing
Music, with light feet tranced by its spell.

580

455

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

τοιγὰρ πολυμηλοτάταν

στρ. β'

ἑστίαν οἰκεί παρα καλλίναον

590 Βοιβίαν λίμναν ἄρότοις δὲ γυνῶν

καὶ πεδίων δαπέδοις

ὄρον ἀμφὶ μὲν αἰλίου κνεφαίαν

ἱππόστασιν αἰθέρα τὰν Μολοσσῶν [ὀρέων] τίθεται,

πόντιον δ' Αἰγαίων ἐπ' ἀκτὰν

ἀλίμενον Πηλίου κρατύνει.

καὶ νῦν δόμον ἀμπετάσας

ἀντ. β'

δέξατο ξείνον νοτερῷ βλεφάρῳ,

τᾶς φίλας κλαίων ἀλόχου νέκυν ἐν

600 δώμασιν ἀρτιθανή·

τὸ γὰρ εὐγενὲς ἐκφέρεται πρὸς αἰδῶ.

ἐν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖσι δὲ πάντ' ἐνεστὶν σοφίας. ἄγαμαι·

πρὸς δ' ἐμᾶ ψυχᾷ θάρσος ἦσται

θεοσεβῇ φῶτα κεδνὰ πράξιν.

ΛΑΜΗΤΟΣ

ἀνδρῶν Φεραίων εὐμενὴς παρουσία,

νέκυν μὲν ἤδη πάντ' ἔχοντα πρόσπολοι

φέρουσιν ἄρδην εἰς τάφον τε καὶ πυράν·

ὑμεῖς δὲ τὴν θανούσαν, ὡς νομίζεται,

610 προσείπατ' ἐξιούσαν ὑστάτην ὁδόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

καὶ μὴν ὀρώ σὸν πατέρα γηραιῷ ποδὶ

στείχοντ', ὀπαδούς τ' ἐν χεροῖν δάμαρτι σῇ

κόσμον φέροντας, νερτέρων ἀγάλματα.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

ἦκω κακοῖσι σοῖσι συγκάμνων, τέκνον·

ἔσθλης γάρ, οὐδεὶς ἀντερεῖ, καὶ σῶφρονος

456

ALCESTIS

(Str. 2)

Wherefore the flocks of my lord unnumbered
 By the Boebian mere fair-rippling stray : 590
 Where the steeds of the sun halt, darkness-cumbered,
 By Molossian mountains, far away
 The borders lie of his golden grain,
 And his rolling stretches of pasture-plain ;
 And the havenless beach Aegean hath slumbered
 Under Pelion long 'neath the peace of his sway.

(Ant. 2)

And now, with the tears from his eyes fast-raining,
 Wide hath he opened his doors to the guest,
 While newly his heart 'neath its burden is straining,
 For the wife that hath died in his halls distressed. 600
 For to honour's heights are the high-born lifted,
 And the good are with truest wisdom gifted ;
 And there broods on mine heart bright trust
 unwaning
 That the god-reverer shall yet be blest.

ADMETUS

O kindly presence of Pheraean men, [servants
 This corpse even now, with all things meet, my
 Bear on their shoulders to the tomb and pyre.
 Wherefore, as custom is, hail ye the dead,
 On the last journey as she goeth forth. 610

CHORUS

Lo, I behold thy sire with aged foot
 Advancing : his attendants in their hands
 Bear ornaments to deck the dead withal.
Enter PHERES with attendants bearing gifts.

PHERES

I come in thine afflictions sorrowing, son :
 A noble wife and virtuous hast thou lost,

620 γυναικὸς ἡμάρτηκας. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν
 φέρειν ἀνάγκη καίπερ ὄντα δύσφορα.
 δέχου δὲ κόσμον τόνδε, καὶ κατὰ χθονὸς
 ἴτω· τὸ ταύτης σῶμα τιμᾶσθαι χρεῶν,
 ἣτις γε τῆς σῆς προὔθανε ψυχῆς, τέκνον,
 καὶ μ' οὐκ ἄπαιδ' ἔθηκεν οὐδ' εἴασε σοῦ
 στερέντα γήρα πενθίμῳ καταφθίνειν,
 πάσαις δ' ἔθηκεν εὐκλεέστερον βίον
 γυναιξίν, ἔργον τλᾶσα γενναῖον τόδε.
 ὦ τόνδε μὲν σώσασ', ἀναστήσασα δὲ
 ἡμᾶς πίτνοντας, χαῖρε, κὰν "Αἰδου δόμοις
 εὖ σοι γένοιτο. φημὶ τοιούτους γάμους
 λύειν βροτοῖσιν, ἢ γαμεῖν οὐκ ἄξιον.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

630 οὐτ' ἦλθες εἰς τόνδ' ἐξ ἐμοῦ κληθεὶς τάφον,
 οὐτ' ἐν φίλοισι σὴν παρουσίαν νέμω.
 κόσμον δὲ τὸν σὸν οὐποθ' ἦδ' ἐνδύσεται.
 οὐ γάρ τι τῶν σῶν ἐνδεὴς ταφήσεται.
 τότε ξυναλγεῖν χρῆν σ' ὅτ' ὠλλύμην ἐγώ.
 σὺ δ' ἐκποδὼν στάς καὶ παρεῖς ἄλλῳ θανεῖν
 νέφ' γέρων ὦν, τόνδ' ἀποιμώξει νεκρόν ;
 οὐκ ἦσθ' ἄρ' ὀρθῶς τοῦδε σώματος πατήρ ;
 οὐδ' ἢ τεκεῖν φάσκουσα καὶ κεκλημένη
 μήτηρ μ' ἔτικτε ; δουλίου δ' ἀφ' αἵματος
 μαστῶ γυναικὸς σῆς ὑπεβλήθην λάθρα ;
 640 ἔδειξας εἰς ἔλεγχον ἐξελθὼν ὃς εἰ,
 καὶ μ' οὐ νομίζω παῖδα σὸν πεφυκέναι.
 ἢ τᾶρα πάντων διαπρέπεις ἀψυχία,
 ὃς τηλικόσδ' ὦν κὰπὶ τέρμ' ἥκων βίου
 οὐκ ἠθέλησας οὐδ' ἐτόλμησας θανεῖν
 τοῦ σοῦ πρὸ παιδός, ἀλλὰ τήνδ' εἰάσατε
 γυναῖκ' ὀθνεῖαν, ἦν ἐγὼ καὶ μητέρα

ALCESTIS

None will gainsay : yet these calamities
We needs must bear, how hard to bear soever.
Receive these ornaments, and let her pass
Beneath the earth : well may the corpse be honoured
Of her who for thy life's sake died, my son ; 620
Who made me not unchilded, left me not
Forlorn of thee to pine in woeful eld.
In all her sisters' eyes she hath crowned her life
With glory, daring such a deed as this.
O saviour of my son, who hast raised us up
In act to fall, all hail ! May bliss be thine
Even in Hades. Thus to wed, I say,
Profiteth men—or nothing-worth is marriage.

ADMETUS

Not bidden of me to her burial comest thou,
Nor count I thine the presence of a friend. 630
Thine ornaments she never shall put on ;
She shall be buried needing naught of thine.
Thou grieve !—thou shouldst have grieved in my
death-hour !
Thou stood'st aloof—the old, didst leave the young
To die : — and wilt thou wail upon this corpse?
Wast thou not, then, true father of my body ?
Did she that said she bare me, and was called
Mother, not give me birth ? Of bondman blood
To thy wife's breast was I brought privily ?
Put to the test, thou showedst who thou art, 640
And I account me not thy true-born son.
Peerless of men in soulless cowardice !
So old, and standing on the verge of life,
Thou hadst no will, no heart hadst thou to die
For thine own son ! Ye let her die, a woman
Not of our house, whom I with righteous cause

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

πατέρα τ' ἂν ἐνδίκως ἂν ἡγοίμην μόνην.
 καίτοι καλόν γ' ἂν τόνδ' ἀγῶν' ἡγωνίσω
 τοῦ σοῦ πρὸ παιδὸς κατθανών, βραχὺς δέ σοι
 650 πάντως ὁ λοιπὸς ἦν βιώσιμος χρόνος.
 [κἀγὼ τ' ἂν ἔζων χῆδε τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον,
 κοῦκ ἂν μονωθεὶς ἔστενον κακοῖς ἐμοῖς.]
 καὶ μὴν ὅσ' ἄνδρα χρή παθεῖν εὐδαίμονα
 πέπονθας· ἤβησας μὲν ἐν τυραννίδι,
 παῖς δ' ἦν ἐγὼ σοι τῶνδε διάδοχος δόμων,
 ὥστ' οὐκ ἄτεκνος κατθανὼν ἄλλοις δόμον
 λείψειν ἔμελλες ὀρφανὸν διαρπάσαι.
 οὐ μὴν ἐρεῖς γέ μ' ὥς ἀτιμάζων τὸ σὸν
 γῆρας θανεῖν προὔδωκά σ', ὅστις αἰδόφρων
 660 πρὸς σ' ἦ μάλιστα· κἀντὶ τῶνδέ μοι χάριν
 τοιάνδε καὶ σὺ χῆ τεκοῦς' ἠλλαξάτην.
 τοιγὰρ φυτεύων παῖδας οὐκέτ' ἂν φθάνοις,
 οἱ γηροβοσκήσουσι καὶ θανόντα σε
 περιστελοῦσι καὶ προθήσονται νεκρόν.
 οὐ γάρ σ' ἔγωγε τῇδ' ἐμῇ θάψω χερί·
 τέθνηκα γὰρ δὴ τοῦπὶ σ'· εἰ δ' ἄλλου τυχὼν
 σωτήρης αὐγὰς εἰσορῶ, κείνου λέγω
 καὶ παῖδά μ' εἶναι καὶ φίλον γηροτρόφον.
 μάτην ἄρ' οἱ γέροντες εὐχονται θανεῖν,
 670 γῆρας ψέγοντες καὶ μακρὸν χρόνον βίου·
 ἦν δ' ἐγγὺς ἔλθῃ θάνατος, οὐδεὶς βούλεται
 θνήσκειν, τὸ γῆρας δ' οὐκέτ' ἔστ' αὐτοῖς βαρύν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

παύσασθ', ἄλις γὰρ ἡ παρούσα συμφορά,
 ὦ παῖ· πατρὸς δέ μὴ παροξύνῃς φρένας.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

ὦ παῖ, τί ν' αὐχεῖς, πότερα Λυδὸν ἢ Φρύγα
 κακοῖς ἐλαύνειν ἀργυρώνητον σέθεν;

ALCESTIS

Might count alone my mother and my father.
 Yet here was honour, hadst thou dared the strife,
 In dying for thy son. A paltry space
 To cling to life in any wise was left. 650
 Then had I lived, and she, through days to come,
 Nor I, left lorn, should thus mine ills bemoan.
 Yet all that may the fortunate betide
 Fell to thy lot ; in manhood's prime a king,
 Me hadst thou son and heir unto thine house,
 So that thou wast not, dying, like to leave
 A childless home for stranger folk to spoil.

Nor canst thou say that flouting thy grey hairs
 I had giv'n thee up to death, whose reverence
 For thee was passing word :—and this the thank 660
 That thou and she that bare me render me !
 Wherefore, inake haste : beget thee other sons
 To foster thy grey hairs, to compass thee
 With death's observance, and lay out thy corpse.
 Not I with this mine hand will bury thee.
 For thee dead am I. If I see the light,—
 Another saviour found,—I call me son
 To him, and loving fosterer of his age.
 With false lips pray the old for death's release,
 Plaining of age and weary-wearing time. 670
 Let death draw near—who hails his coming? None :
 No more is eld a burden unto them.

CHORUS

O hush ! Suffice the affliction at the doors.
 O son, infuriate not thy father's soul.

PHERES

Son, whom, think'st thou—some Lydian slave or
 Phrygian
 Bought with thy money?—thus beratest thou ?

οὐκ οἶσθα Θεσσαλὸν με κατὰ Θεσσαλοῦ
 πατὴρ γηγῶτα γνησίως ἐλεύθερον;
 ἄγαν ὑβρίζεις, καὶ νεανίας λόγους
 680 ῥίπτων ἐς ἡμᾶς οὐ βαλὼν οὕτως ἄπει.
 ἐγὼ δέ σ' οἴκων δεσπότην ἐγεινάμην
 καθρεψ', ὀφείλω δ' οὐχ ὑπερθνήσκειν σέθεν·
 οὐ γὰρ πατρῷον τόνδ' ἐδεξάμην νόμον,
 παίδων προθνήσκειν πατέρας, οὐδ' Ἑλληνικόν.
 σαυτῷ γὰρ εἴτε δυστυχῆς εἴτ' εὐτυχῆς
 ἔφυς· ἂ δ' ἡμῶν χρῆν σε τυγχάνειν, ἔχεις.
 πολλῶν μὲν ἄρχεις, πολυπλέθρους δέ σοι γύας
 λείψω· πατὴρ γὰρ ταῦτ' ἐδεξάμην πάρα.
 τί δῆτά σ' ἠδίκηκα; τοῦ σ' ἀποστερῶ;
 690 μὴ θνήσχ' ὑπὲρ τοῦδ' ἀνδρός, οὐδ' ἐγὼ πρὸ σοῦ.
 χαίρεις ὀρών φῶς· πατέρα δ' οὐ χαίρειν δοκεῖς;
 ἢ μὴν πολὺν γε τὸν κάτω λογίζομαι
 χρόνον, τὸ δὲ ζῆν μικρόν, ἀλλ' ὅμως γλυκύ.
 σὺ γοῦν ἀναιδῶς διεμάχου τὸ μὴ θανεῖν,
 καὶ ζῆς παρελθὼν τὴν πεπρωμένην τύχην,
 ταύτην κατακτάς· εἴτ' ἐμὴν ἀψυχίαν
 λέγεις, γυναικός, ὦ κάκισθ', ἡσσημένος,
 ἢ τοῦ καλοῦ σοῦ προὔθανεν νεανίου;
 σοφῶς δ' ἐφηῦρες ὥστε μὴ θανεῖν ποτε,
 700 εἰ τὴν παρούσαν κατθανεῖν πείσεις αἰεὶ
 γυναῖχ' ὑπὲρ σοῦ· κατ' ὀνειδίζεις φίλοις
 τοῖς μὴ θέλουσι δρᾶν τάδ', αὐτὸς ὢν κακός;
 σίγα· νόμιζε δ', εἰ σὺ τὴν σαυτοῦ φιλεῖς
 ψυχὴν, φιλεῖν ἅπαντας· εἰ δ' ἡμᾶς κακῶς
 ἐρεῖς, ἀκούσει πολλὰ κού ψευδῇ κακά.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πλείω λέλεκται νῦν τε καὶ τὰ πρὶν κακά·
 παῦσαι δέ, πρέσβυ, παῖδα σὸν κακορροθῶν.

ALCESTIS

What, know'st thou not that I Thessalian am,
Sprung from Thessalian sire, free man true-born?
This insolence passeth!—hurling malapert words
On me, not lightly thus shalt thou come off! 680

Thee I begat and nurtured, of mine house
The heir: no debt is mine to die for thee.
Not from my sires such custom I received
That sires for sons should die: no Greek law this.
Born for thyself wast thou, to fortune good
Or evil: all thy dues from me thou hast.
O'er many folk thou rulest; wide demesnes
Shall I leave thee: to me my father left them.
What is my wrong, my robbery of thee?
For me die thou not, I die not for thee. 690
Thou joy'st to see light—shall thy father joy not?
Sooth, I account our time beneath the earth
Long, and our life-space short, yet is it sweet.
Shamelessly hast thou fought against thy death:
Thy life is but transgression of thy doom
And murder of thy wife! *My* cowardice!—
This from thee, dastard, by a woman outdone
Who died for thee, the glorious-gallant youth!

Cunning device hast thou devised to die
Never, cajoling still wife after wife 700
To die for thee!—and dost revile thy friends
Who will not so—and thou the coward, thou?
Peace! e'en bethink thee, if thou lov'st thy life,
So all love theirs. Thou, if thou speakest evil
Of us, shalt hear much evil, and that true.

CHORUS

Ye have said too much, thou now, and he before.
Refrain, old sire, from railing on thy son.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

λέγ', ὥς ἐμοῦ λέξαντος· εἰ δ' ἀλγείς κλύων
τάληθές, οὐ χρῆν σ' εἰς ἔμ' ἔξαμαρτάνειν.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

710 σοῦ δ' ἂν προθυήσκων μᾶλλον ἔξημάρτανον.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ταυτόν γὰρ ἡβῶντ' ἄνδρα καὶ πρέσβυν θανεῖν;

ΦΕΡΗΣ

ψυχῇ μιᾷ ζῆν, οὐ δυοῖν ὀφείλομεν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

καὶ μὴν Διός γε μείζονα ζώης χρόνον.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

ἄρᾳ γονεῦσιν οὐδὲν ἔκδικον παθῶν;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

μακροῦ βίου γὰρ ἡσθόμην ἐρῶντά σε.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

ἀλλ' οὐ σὺ νεκρόν γ' ἀντὶ σοῦ τόνδ' ἐκφέρεις;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

σημεῖα τῆς σῆς, ὦ κάκιστ', ἀψυχίας.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

οὔτοι πρὸς ἡμῶν γ' ὤλετ'· οὐκ ἐρεῖς τόδε.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

φεῦ·
εἴθ' ἀνδρὸς ἔλθοις τοῦδέ γ' εἰς χρεῖαν ποτέ.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

720 μνήστευε πολλάς, ὥς θάνωσι πλείονες.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

σοὶ τοῦτ' ὄνειδος· οὐ γὰρ ἠθελες θανεῖν.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

φίλον τὸ φέγγος τοῦτο τοῦ θεοῦ, φίλον.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

κακὸν τὸ λῆμα κοῦκ ἐν ἀνδράσιν τὸ σόν.

ALCESTIS

ADMETUS

Say on, say on ; I have said : if hearing truth
Gall thee, thou shouldest not have done me wrong.

PHERES

I had done more wrong, had I died for thee. 710

ADMETUS

What, for the young and old is death the same ?

PHERES

One life to live, not twain—this is our due.

ADMETUS

Have thy desire—one life outlasting Zeus.

PHERES

Dost curse thy parents, who hast had no wrong ?

ADMETUS

Ay, whom I marked love-sick for dateless life.

PHERES

What ?—art not burying her in thine own stead ?

ADMETUS

A token, dastard, of thy cowardice.

PHERES

I did her not to death : thou canst not say it.

ADMETUS

Mayest thou feel thy need of me some day !

PHERES

Woo many women, that the more may die. 720

ADMETUS

This taunt strikes thee—'tis thou wast loth to die.

PHERES

Sweet is yon sun-god's light, yea, it is sweet.

ADMETUS

Base is thy spirit, and unmeet for men.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΦΕΡΗΣ

οὐκ ἐγγελάς γέροντα βαστάζων νεκρόν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

θανεῖ γε μέντοι δυσκλεής, ὅταν θάνης.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

κακῶς ἀκούειν οὐ μέλει θανόντι μοι.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ· τὸ γῆρας ὡς ἀναιδείας πλέων.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

ἦδ' οὐκ ἀναιδής· τήνδ' ἐφηῦρες ἄφρονα.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἄπελθε καὶ μὲ τόνδ' ἔα θάψαι νεκρόν.

ΦΕΡΗΣ

730 ἄπειμι· θάψεις δ' αὐτὸς ὦν αὐτῆς φονεύς,
δίκας τε δώσεις τοῖσι κηδεσταῖς ἔτι.
ἦ τάρ' Ἄκαστος οὐκέτ' ἔστ' ἐν ἀνδράσιν,
εἰ μὴ σ' ἀδελφῆς αἷμα τιμωρήσεται.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἔρρων νυν αὐτὸς χῆ ξυνοικήσασά σοι,
ἄπαιδε παιδὸς ὄντος, ὥσπερ ἄξιοι,
γηράσκει· οὐ γὰρ τῷδέ γ' εἰς ταῦτόν στέγος
νεῖσθ'· εἰ δ' ἀπειπεῖν χρῆν με κηρύκων ὕπο
τὴν σὴν πατρώαν ἐστίαν, ἀπείπον ἄν.
740 ἡμεῖς δέ, τὸν ποσὶν γὰρ οἰστέον κακόν,
στείχωμεν, ὥς ἂν ἐν πυρᾷ θῶμεν νεκρόν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἰὼ ἰώ. σχετλία τόλμης,
ὦ γενναία καὶ μέγ' ἀρίστη,
χαῖρε· πρόφρων σὲ χθονίός θ' Ἑρμῆς
Ἀϊδης τε δέχουτ'. εἰ δέ τι κάκει

ALCESTIS

PHERES

Not mine old corpse to the grave thou bear'st with
glee!

ADMETUS

Yet, when thou diest, in ill fame shalt thou die.

PHERES

Ill fame is naught to me when I have died.

ADMETUS

Hear him! how full of shamelessness is eld!

PHERES

Not shameless she,—but senseless hast thou found
her.

ADMETUS

Begone: leave me to bury this my dead.

PHERES

I go: her murderer will bury her! 730
Thou shalt yet answer for it to her kin.
Surely Acastus is no more a man,
If he of thee claim not his sister's blood. [*Exit.*

ADMETUS

Avaunt, with her that kennelleth with thee!
Childless grow old, as ye deserve, while lives
Your child: ye shall not come beneath one roof
With me. If need were to renounce by heralds
Thine hearth paternal, I had renounced it now.
Let us—for we must bear the present ill—
Pass on, to lay our dead upon the pyre. 740

CHORUS

Alas for the loving and daring!
Farewell to the noblest and best!
May Hermes conduct thee down-faring
Kindly, and Hades to rest

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ -

πλέον ἔστ' ἀγαθοῖς, τούτων μετέχουσ'
 "Αἰδου νύμφη παρεδρεύοις.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

- 750 πολλοὺς μὲν ἤδη καπὸ παντοίας χθονὸς
 ξένους μολόντας οἷδ' ἐς Ἀδμήτου δόμους,
 οἷς δεῖπνα προὔθηκ'. ἀλλὰ τοῦδ' οὐπω ξένου
 κακίον' εἰς τήνδ' ἐστίαν ἐδεξάμην.
 ὃς πρῶτα μὲν πενθοῦντα δεσπότην ὀρών
 εἰσῆλθε κατόλμησ' ἀμείψασθαι πύλας.
 ἔπειτα δ' οὔτι σωφρόνως ἐδέξατο
 τὰ προστυχόντα ξένια, συμφορὰν μαθών,
 ἀλλ' εἴ τι μὴ φέροιμεν, ὥτρυνεν φέρειν.
 ποτήρα δ' ἐν χεῖρεσσι κίσσινον λαβὼν
 πίνει μελαίνης μητρὸς εὐζωρον μέθυ,
 ἕως ἐθέρμην' αὐτὸν ἀμφιβᾶσα φλόξ
 οἴνου· στέφει δὲ κρᾶτα μυρσίνης κλάδοις
 760 ἄμους' ὑλακτῶν· δισσὰ δ' ἦν μέλη κλύειν·
 ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἦδε, τῶν ἐν Ἀδμήτου κακῶν
 οὐδὲν προτιμῶν, οἰκέται δ' ἐκλαίομεν
 δέσποιναν· ὄμμα δ' οὐκ ἐδείκνυμεν ξένῳ
 τέγγοντες· Ἀδμητος γὰρ ᾧδ' ἐφίετο.
 καὶ νῦν ἐγὼ μὲν ἐν δόμοισιν ἐστὶν
 ξένον, πανοῦργον κλῶπα καὶ ληστήν τινα,
 ἣ δ' ἐκ δόμων βέβηκεν, οὐδ' ἐφεσπόμεν
 οὐδ' ἐξέτεινα χεῖρ', ἀποιμώζων ἐμὴν
 δέσποιναν, ἣ μοι πᾶσί τ' οἰκέταισιν ἦν
 770 μήτηρ· κακῶν γὰρ μυρίων ἐρρύετο,
 ὀργὰς μαλάσσουσ' ἀνδρός. ἄρα τὸν ξένον
 στυγῶ δικαίως, ἐν κακοῖς ἀφιγμένον;

ALCESTIS

Receive thee ! If any atonement
For ills even there may betide
To the good, O thine be enthronement
By Hades' bride !

[*Exeunt OMNES in funeral procession.*]

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT

Full many a guest, from many a land which came
Unto Admetus' dwelling, have I known,
Have set before them meat : but never guest
More pestilent received I to this hearth : 750
Who first, albeit he saw my master mourning,
Entered, and passed the threshold unashamed ;
Then, nowise courteously received the fare
Found with us, though our woeful plight he knew,
But, what we brought not, hectoring bade us bring.
The ivy cup uplifts he in his hands,
And swills the darkling mother's fiery blood,
Till the wine's flame enwrapped him, heating him.
Then did he wreath his head with myrtle sprays,
Dissonant-howling. Diverse strains were heard : 760
For he sang on, regardless all of ills
Darkening Admetus' house ; we servants wept
Our mistress : yet we showed not to the guest
Eyes tear-bedewed, for so Admetus bade.
And now within the house must I be feasting
This guest,—a lawless thief, a bandit rogue,
While forth the house she is borne ! I followed
not,
Nor stretched the hand, nor wailed unto my mistress
Farewell, who was to me and all the household
A mother ; for from ills untold she saved us, 770
Assuaging her lord's wrath. Do I not well
To loathe this guest, intruder on our griefs ?

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὔτος, τί σεμνὸν καὶ πεφροντικὸς βλέπεις;
 οὐ χρὴ σκυθρωπὸν τοῖς ξένοις τὸν πρόσπολον
 εἶναι, δέχεσθαι δ' εὐπροσηγόρῳ φρενί.
 σὺ δ' ἄνδρ' ἐταῖρον δεσπότην παρόνθ' ὀρώων,
 στυγνῷ προσώπῳ καὶ συνωφρυωμένῳ
 δέχει, θυραίου πῆματος σπουδὴν ἔχων.
 780 δεῦρ' ἔλθ', ὅπως ἂν καὶ σοφώτερος γένη.
 τὰ θνητὰ πράγματ' οἶδας ἢν ἔχει φύσιν;
 οἶμαι μὲν οὐ· πόθεν γάρ; ἀλλ' ἄκουέ μου.
 βροτοῖς ἅπασι κατθανεῖν ὀφείλεται,
 κοῦκ ἔστι θνητῶν ὅστις ἐξεπίσταται
 τὴν αὔριον μέλλουσαν εἰ βιώσεται·
 τὸ τῆς τύχης γὰρ ἀφανὲς οἱ προβήσεται,
 καῖστ' οὐ διδακτὸν οὐδ' ἀλίσκεται τέχνῃ.
 ταῦτ' οὖν ἀκούσας καὶ μαθὼν ἐμοῦ πάρα,
 εὐφραине σαυτόν, πῖνε, τὸν καθ' ἡμέραν
 βίον λογίζου σόν, τὰ δ' ἄλλα τῆς τύχης.
 790 τίμα δὲ καὶ τὴν πλείστον ἡδίστην θεῶν
 Κύπριν βροτοῖσιν· εὐμενὴς γὰρ ἡ θεός.
 τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἔασον ταῦτα καὶ πιθοῦ λόγοις
 ἐμοῖσιν, εἴπερ ὀρθά σοι δοκῶ λέγειν·
 οἶμαι μὲν. οὐκ οὖν τὴν ἄγαν λύπην ἀφείς·
 πῖνε μεθ' ἡμῶν τάσδ' ὑπερβαλὼν τύχας,
 στεφάνοις πυκασθείς; καὶ σάφ' οἶδ' ὀθούνεκα
 τοῦ νῦν σκυθρωποῦ καὶ ξυνεστῶτος φρενῶν
 μεθορμεί σε πίτυλος ἐμπεσὼν σκύφου.
 ὄντας δὲ θνητοὺς θνητὰ καὶ φρονεῖν χρεῶν,
 800 ὥς τοῖς γε σεμνοῖς καὶ συνωφρυωμένοις
 ἅπασιν ἔστιν, ὥς γ' ἐμοὶ χρῆσθαι κριτῇ,
 οὐ βίος ἀληθῶς ὁ βίος, ἀλλὰ συμφορά.

ALCESTIS

Enter HERCULES.

HERCULES

Ho, fellow, why this solemn brooding look?
The servant should not lower upon the guest,
But welcome him with kindly-beaming cheer.
Thou, seeing here in presence thy lord's friend,
With visage sour and cloud of knitted brows
Receiv'st him, fretting o'er an alien grief.
Hither to me, that wiser thou mayst grow.
The lot of man—its nature knowest thou?
I trow not : how shouldst thou? Give ear to me.

780

From all mankind the debt of death is due,
Nor of all mortals is there one that knows
If through the coming morrow he shall live :
For trackless is the way of fortune's feet,
Not to be taught, nor won by art of man.
This hearing then, and learning it from me,
Make merry, drink : the life from day to day
Account thine own, all else in fortune's power.

Honour withal the sweetest of the Gods
To men, the Cyprian Queen—a gracious Goddess!
Away with other thoughts, and heed my words,
If thou dost think I speak wise words and true :
So think I. Hence with sorrow overwrought ;
Rise above this affliction : drink with me,
Thy brows with garlands bound. Full well I wot,
From all this lowering spirit prison-pent
Thine anchor shall Sir Beaker's plash upheave.
What, man !—the mortal must be mortal-minded.
So, for your solemn wights of knitted brows,
For each and all,—if thou for judge wilt take me,—
Life is not truly life, but mere affliction.

790

800

- 471

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἐπιστάμεσθα ταῦτα· νῦν δὲ πράσσομεν
οὐχ οἷα κώμου καὶ γέλωτος ἄξια.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

γυνὴ θυραῖος ἢ θανούσα· μὴ λίαν
πένθει· δόμων γὰρ ζῶσι τῶνδε δεσπότες.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

τί ζῶσιν; οὐ κάτοιισθα τὰν δόμοις κακά;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰ μὴ τι σός με δεσπότης ἐψεύσατο.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἄγαν ἐκεῖνός ἐστ' ἄγαν φιλόξενος.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

810 οὐ χρὴν μ' ὀθνείου γ' εἶνεκ' εὖ πάσχειν νεκροῦ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἦ κάρτα μέντοι καὶ λίαν θυραῖος ἦν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μὼν ξυμφορὰν τιν' οὐσαν οὐκ ἔφραζέ μοι;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

χαίρων ἴθ'. ἡμῖν δεσποτῶν μέλει κακά.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὄδ' οὐ θυραίων τημάτων ἄρχει λόγος.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οὐ γάρ τι κωμάζοντ' ἂν ἡχθόμην σ' ὀρώων.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἦ πέπονθα δεῖν' ὑπὸ ξένων ἐμῶν;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

οὐκ ἡλθες ἐν δέοντι δέξασθαι δόμοις·
πένθος γὰρ ἡμῖν ἐστι· καὶ κουρὰν βλέπεις
μελαμπέπλους στολμούς τε.

ALCESTIS

SERVANT

All this we know : but now are we in plight
Not meet for laughter and for revelry.

HERCULES

The woman dead is alien-born : grieve not
Exceeding much. Yet live the household's lords.

SERVANT

Live, quotha !—know'st thou not the house's ills ?

HERCULES

Yea, if thy master lied not unto me.

SERVANT

Guest-fain he is—ah, guest-fain overmuch !

HERCULES

A stranger dead—and no guest-cheer for me ?

810

SERVANT

O yea, an alien—overmuch an alien !

HERCULES

Ha ! was he keeping some affliction back ?

SERVANT

Go thou in peace : our lords' ills are for us.

*Turns away ; but HERCULES seizes him, and
makes him face him.*

HERCULES

Grief for a stranger—such words mean not that !

SERVANT

Else had I not sore vexed beheld thy revel.

HERCULES

How ! have I sorry handling of mine hosts ?

SERVANT

Thou cam'st in hour unmeet for welcoming,
For grief is on us ; and thou see'st shorn hair
And vesture of black robes.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

820 τίς δ' ὁ καθθανών;
μῶν ἢ τέκνων τι φροῦδον ἢ πατὴρ γέρων;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

γυνὴ μὲν οὖν ὄλωλεν Ἀδμήτου, ξένε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί φῆς; ἔπειτα δῆτά μ' ἐξενίζετε;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἦδεῖτο γάρ σε τῶνδ' ἀπώσασθαι δόμων.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ὦ σχέτλι', οἷας ἤμπλακες ξυναόρου.

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ἀπωλόμεσθα πάντες, οὐ κείνη μόνη.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

830 ἀλλ' ἡσθόμην μὲν ὅμμ' ἰδὼν δακρυρροοῦν
κουράν τε καὶ πρόσωπον· ἀλλ' ἔπειθέ με
λέγων θυραῖον κῆδος εἰς τάφον φέρειν.
βία δὲ θυμοῦ τάσδ' ὑπερβαλὼν πύλας
ἔπινον ἀνδρὸς ἐν φιλοξένου δόμοις
πράσσοντος οὔτω. κατὰ κωμάζω κᾶρα
στεφάνοις πυκασθεῖς; ἀλλὰ σοῦ τὸ μὴ φράσαι,
κακοῦ τοσούτου δώμασιν προσκειμένου.
ποῦ καὶ σφε θάπτει; ποῦ νιν εὐρήσω μολών;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ

ὀρθὴν παρ' οἶμον, ἢ πλὴ Λάρισαν φέρει,
τύμβον κατόψει ξεστὸν ἐκ προαστίου.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

840 ὦ πολλὰ τλᾶσα καρδία καὶ χεὶρ ἐμή,
νῦν δεῖξον οἶον παῖδά σ' ἢ Τιρυνθία
'Ηλεκτρυνόνος ἐγείνατ' Ἀλκμήνη Δί.
δεῖ γάρ με σῶσαι τὴν θανούσαν ἀρτίως

ALCESTIS

HERCULES

But who hath died ?
Not of the children one, or grey-haired sire ? 820

SERVANT

Nay, but Admetus' wife is dead, O guest.

HERCULES

How say'st thou?—Ha, even then ye gave me
welcome ?

SERVANT

For shame he could not thrust thee from these doors

HERCULES

O hapless ! what a helpmeet hast thou lost !

SERVANT

We have all perished, and not she alone.

HERCULES

I felt it, when I saw his tear-drowned eyes,
His shaven hair, his face : yet he prevailed,
Saying he bare a stranger-friend to burial.
I passed this threshold in mine heart's despite,
And drank in halls of him that loves the guest, 830
When thus his plight ! And am I revelling
With wreathed head ? O my friend, that thou
shouldst say

Naught, when on thine home such affliction lay ! . . .
Where doth he bury her ? Where shall I find her ?

SERVANT

By the straight path that leads Larissa-wards
Shalt see the hewn-stone tomb without the walls.

HERCULES

O much-enduring heart and hand of mine,
Now show what son the Lady of Tiryns bare,
Electryon's child Alcmena, unto Zeus.
For I must save the woman newly dead, 840

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

γυναῖκα κείς τόνδ' αὖθις ἰδρῦσαι δόμον
 Ἄλκηστιν, Ἀδμήτῳ θ' ὑπουργῆσαι χάριν.
 ἔλθων δ' ἄνακτα τὸν μελάμπεπλον νεκρῶν
 Θάνατον φυλάξω, καὶ νιν εὐρήσειν δοκῶ
 πίνοντα τύμβου πλησίον προσφαγμάτων.
 κἄνπερ λοχαίας αὐτὸν ἐξ ἔδρας συθεῖς
 μάρψω, κύκλον δὲ περιβαλῶ χεροῖν ἐμαῖν,
 οὐκ ἔστιν ὅστις αὐτὸν ἐξαιρήσεται
 μογοῦντα πλευρά, πρὶν γυναῖκ' ἐμοὶ μεθῇ.
 850 ἦν δ' οὖν ἁμάρτῳ τῆσδ' ἄγρας, καὶ μὴ μόλῃ
 πρὸς αἵματηρόν πέλανον, εἰμι τῶν κάτω
 Κόρης Ἀνακτός τ' εἰς ἀνηλίους δόμους
 αἰτήσομαί τε· καὶ πέποιθ' ἄξειν ἄνω
 Ἄλκηστιν, ὥστε χερσὶν ἐνθεῖναι ξένου,
 ὃς μ' εἰς δόμους ἐδέξατ' οὐδ' ἀπήλασε,
 καίπερ βαρεῖα συμφορὰ πεπληγμένος,
 ἔκρυπτε δ' ὦν γενναῖος, αἰδεσθεὶς ἐμέ.
 τίς τοῦδε μᾶλλον Θεσσαλῶν φιλόξενος,
 τίς Ἑλλάδ' οἰκῶν; τοιγὰρ οὐκ ἐρεῖ κακὸν
 860 εὐεργετῆσαι φῶτα γενναῖος γεγώς.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἰώ. στυγναὶ πρόσοδοι, στυγναὶ δ' ὄψεις
 χήρων μελάθρων· ἰώ μοί μοι. αἰαῖ.
 ποῖ βῶ; πᾷ στῶ; τί λέγω; τί δὲ μή;

πῶς ἂν ὀλοίμαν;
 ἢ βαρυδαίμονα μήτηρ μ' ἔτεκεν.
 ζηλῶ φθιμένους, κείνων ἔραμαι,
 κεῖν' ἐπιθυμῶ δώματα ναίειν.

ALCESTIS

And set Alcestis in this house again,
 And render to Admetus good for good.
 I go. The sable-vestured King of Corpses,
 Death, will I watch for, and shall find, I trow,
 Drinking the death-draught hard beside the tomb.
 And if I lie in wait, and dart from ambush,
 And seize, and with mine arms' coil compass him,
 None is there shall deliver from mine hands
 His straining sides, ere he yield up his prey.
 Yea, though I miss the quarry, and he come not 850
 Unto the blood-clot, to the sunless homes
 Down will I fare of Cora and her King,
 And make demand. I doubt not I shall lead
 Alcestis up, and give to mine host's hands,
 Who to his halls received, nor drave me thence,
 Albeit smitten with affliction sore,
 But hid it, like a prince, respecting me.
 Who is more guest-fain of Thessalians?
 Who in all Hellas? O, he shall not say
 That one so princely showed a base man kindness. 860

[Exit.

*Enter ADMETUS, with CHORUS and Attendants,
 returning from the funeral.*

ADMETUS

O hateful returning !

O hateful to see

Drear halls full of yearning

For the lost—ah me !

What aim or what rest have I?—silence or speech,
 of what help shall they be ?

Would God I were dead !

O, I came from the womb

To a destiny dread !

Ah, those in the tomb—

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

870

οὔτε γὰρ αὐγὰς χαίρω προσορῶν,
οὔτ' ἐπὶ γαίᾳ πόδα πεζεύων·
τοῖον ὄμηρόν μ' ἀποσυλήσας
Ἄϊδη Θάνατος παρέδωκεν.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πρόβα πρόβα. βᾶθι κεῦθος οἴκων. στρ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

αἰαῖ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πέπονθας ἄξι' αἰαγμάτων.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἔ ἔ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

δι' ὀδύνας ἔβας,
σάφ' οἶδα.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὰν νέρθην οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖς.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὦ μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τὸ μήποτ' εἰσιδεῖν φιλίας ἀλόχου
πρόσωπον ἄντα λυπρόν.

478

ALCESTIS

How I envy them ! How I desire them, and long to
abide in their home !

To mine eyes nothing sweet
Is the light of the heaven,
Nor the earth to my feet ;
Such a helpmeet is riven

870

By Death from my side, and my darling to Hades
the spoiler hath given.

CHORUS

Pass on thou, and hide thee (Str.)
In thy chambers.

ADMETUS

Ah woe !

CHORUS

Wail the griefs that betide thee :
How canst thou but so ?

ADMETUS

O God !

CHORUS

Thou hast passed through deep waters
of anguish—I know it, I know.

ADMETUS

Woe ! darkest of days !

CHORUS

No help bringeth this
To thy love in that place.

ADMETUS

Woe !

CHORUS

Bitter it is

The face of a wife well-belovèd for ever and ever to
miss.

479

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

880

ἔμνησας ὃ μου φρένας ἤλκωσεν·
τί γὰρ ἀνδρὶ κακὸν μείζον ἁμαρτεῖν
πιστῆς ἀλόχου; μή ποτε γήμας
ᾧφελον οἰκεῖν μετὰ τῆσδε δόμους.

ζῆλῳ δ' ἀγάμους ἀτέκνους τε βροτῶν·
μία γὰρ ψυχὴ, τῆς ὑπεραλγεῖν
μέτριον ἄχθος·

παίδων δὲ νόσους καὶ νυμφιδίους
εὐνὰς θανάτοις κεραῖζομένας
οὐ τλητὸν ὁρᾶν, ἐξὸν ἀτέκνους
ἀγάμους τ' εἶναι διὰ παντός.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τύχα τύχα δυσπάλαιστος ἦκει· ἀντ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

αἰαί.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

πέρας δέ γ' οὐδὲν ἀλγῶν τίθης.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

890

ἔ ἔ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

βαρέα μὲν φέρειν,
ὅμως δὲ—

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

φεῦ φεῦ.

480

ALCESTIS

ADMETUS

Thou hast stricken mine heart
Where the wound will not heal.
What is worse than to part
From the loving and leal?

880

Would God I had wedded her not, home-bliss with
Alcestis to feel!

O, I envy the lot
Of the man without wife,
Without child: single-wrought
Is the strand of his life:

No soul-crushing burden of sorrow, no strength-over-
mastering strife.

But that children should sicken,
That gloom of despair
Over bride-beds should thicken,
What spirit can bear,
When childless, unwedded, a man through life's calm
journey might fare?

CHORUS

Thee Fortune hath met, (Ant.)
Strong wrestler, and thrown;
Yet no bounds hast thou set—

890

ADMETUS

Woe's me!—

CHORUS

To thy moan.

O, thy burden is heavy!

ADMETUS

Alas!

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

τλᾶθ' οὐ σὺ πρῶτος ὤλεσας—

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἰὼ μοί μοι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

γυναῖκα· συμφορὰ δ' ἑτέρους ἑτέρα
πιέζει φανείσα θνατῶν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὦ μακρὰ πένθη λῦπαί τε φίλων
τῶν ὑπὸ γαίαν.
τί μ' ἐκώλυσας ῥίψαι τύμβου
τάφρον εἰς κοίλην καὶ μετ' ἐκείνης
τῆς μέγ' ἀρίστης κείσθαι φθίμενον;

900

δύο δ' ἀντὶ μιᾶς Ἀϊδης ψυχὰς
τὰς πιστοτάτας σὺν ἂν ἔσχεν, ὁμοῦ
χθονίαν λίμνην διαβάντε.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐμοί τις ἦν
ἐν γένει, ᾧ κόρος ἀξιόθρηνος
ὤλετ' ἐν δόμοισιν
μονόπαις· ἀλλ' ἔμπας
ἔφερε κακὸν ἄλις, ἄτεκνος ὢν,
πολιὰς ἐπὶ χαίτας

στρ.

ALCESTIS

CHORUS

Yet endure it : thou art not alone.
Not thou art the first
Of bereaved ones.

ADMETUS

Ah me!

CHORUS

Such tempest hath burst
Upon many ere thee.
Unto each his mischance, when the surges roll up from
Calamity's sea.

ADMETUS

O long grief and pain
For belovèd ones passed!
Why didst thou restrain,
When myself I had cast
Down into her grave, with the noblest to lie peace-
lulled at the last?

Not one soul, but two
Had been Hades' prey,
Souls utterly true
United for aye,
Which together o'er waves of the underworld-mere
had passed this day.

900

CHORUS

Of my kin was there one, (Str.)
And the life's light failed
In his halls of a son,
One meet to be wailed, [prevailed ;
His only belovèd : howbeit the manhood within him
And the ills heaven-sent
As a man did he bear,
Though by this was he bent
Unto silvered hair,

483

11 2

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

910 ἤδη προπετῆς ὦν
βιότου τε πόρσω.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὦ σχῆμα δόμων, πῶς εἰσέλθω ;
πῶς δ' οἰκήσω μεταπίπτοντος
δαίμονος; οἴμοι. πολὺ γὰρ τὸ μέσον.

τότε μὲν πεύκαις σὺν Πηλιάσιν
σύν θ' ὕμεναίοις ἔστειχον ἔσω,
φιλίας ἀλόχου χέρα βαστάζων·

920 πολυάχητος δ' εἶπετο κῶμος,
τήν τε θανοῦσαν καὶ ὀλβίζων,
ὥς εὐπατρίδαι καὶ ἀπ' ἀμφοτέρων
ὄντες ἀριστέων σύζυγες ἦμεν.

νῦν δ' ὕμεναίων γόος ἀντίπαλος
λευκῶν τε πέπλων μέλανες στολμοὶ
πέμπουσί μ' ἔσω
λέκτρων κοίτας ἐς ἐρήμους.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

παρ' εὐτυχῇ
σοὶ πότμον ἦλθεν ἀπειροκάκῳ τόδ'
ἄλγος· ἀλλ' ἔσωσας
βίοτον καὶ ψυχάν.

ἀντ·

ALCESTIS

Far on in life's path, without son for his remnant of
weakness to care.

910

ADMETUS

O, how can I tread
Thy threshold, fair home?
How shelter mine head
'Neath thy roof, now the doom
Of my fate's dice changeth?—ah me, what change
upon all things is come!
For with torches aflame
Of the Pelian pine,
And with bride-song I came
In that hour divine,
Upbearing the hand of a wife—thine hand, O
darling mine!
Followed revellers, raising
Acclaim: ever broke
From the lips of them praising,
Of the dead as they spoke,
And of me, how the noble, the children of kings,
Love joined 'neath his yoke.
But for bridal song
Is the wail for the dead,
And, for white-robed throng,
Black vesture hath led
Me to halls where the ghost of delight lieth couched
on a desolate bed.

920

CHORUS

To the trance of thy bliss (Ant.)
Sudden anguish was brought.
Never lesson like this
To thine heart had been taught:
Yet thy life hast thou won, and thy soul hast
delivered from death:—is it naught?

485

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

930 ἔθανε δάμαρ, ἔλιπε φιλίαν·
τί νέον τόδε; πολλοὺς
ἤδη παρέλυσεν
θάνατος δάμαρτος.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

φίλοι, γυναικὸς δαίμον' εὐτυχέστερον
τοῦμοῦ νομίζω, καίπερ οὐ δοκοῦνθ' ὁμως·
τῆς μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἄλγος ἄψεταιί ποτε,
πολλῶν δὲ μόχθων εὐκλεῆς ἐπαύσατο.
ἐγὼ δ', ὃν οὐ χρὴν ζῆν, παρεῖς τὸ μόρσιμον
940 λυπρὸν διάξω βίοτον· ἄρτι μανθάνω.
πῶς γὰρ δόμων τῶνδ' εἰσόδους ἀνέξομαι;
τίν' ἂν προσειπῶν, τοῦ δὲ προσρηθεῖς ὑπο
τερπνῆς τύχοιμ' ἂν εἰσόδου; ποῖ τρέφομαι;
ἢ μὲν γὰρ ἔνδον ἐξελαῖ μ' ἐρημία,
γυναικὸς εὐνάς εὐτ' ἂν εἰσίδω κενὰς
θρόνους τ' ἐν οἷσιν ἴξε, καὶ κατὰ στέγας
αὐχμηρὸν οὐδας, τέκνα δ' ἀμφι γούνασι
πίπτοντα κλαίῃ μητέρ', οἱ δὲ δεσπότην
στένωσιν οἷαν ἐκ δόμων ἀπώλεσαν.
950 τὰ μὲν κατ' οἴκους τοιάδ'· ἔξωθεν δέ με
γάμοι τ' ἐλῶσι Θεσσαλῶν καὶ ξύλλογοι
γυναικοπληθεῖς· οὐ γὰρ ἐξανέξομαι
λεύσσων δάμαρτος τῆς ἐμῆς ὁμήλικας.
ἐρεῖ δέ μ' ὅστις ἐχθρὸς ὢν κυρεῖ τάδε·
ἰδοῦ τὸν αἰσχρῶς ζῶνθ', ὃς οὐκ ἔτλη θανεῖν,
ἀλλ' ἦν ἔγηνμεν ἀντιδοὺς ἀψυχία
πέφευγεν· Αἰδην· εἴτ' ἀνὴρ εἶναι δοκεῖ;
στρυγεῖ δὲ τοὺς τεκόντας, αὐτὸς οὐ θέλων
θανεῖν. τοιάνδε πρὸς κακοῖσι κληδόνα
960 ἔξω. τί μοι ζῆν δῆτα κύδιον, φίλοι,
κακῶς κλύοντι καὶ κακῶς πεπραγότι;

ALCESTIS

Thy wife hath departed :

Love tender and true

930

Hath she left :—stricken-hearted,

Wherein is this new ?

Hath Death not unyoked from the chariot of Love
full many ere you ?

ADMETUS

Friends, I account the fortune of my wife

Happier than mine, albeit it seem not so.

For naught of grief shall touch her any more,

And glorious rest she finds from many toils.

But I, unmeet to live, my doom outrun,

Shall drag out bitter days : I know it now.

940

How shall I bear to enter this mine home ?

Speaking to whom, and having speech of whom,

Shall I find joy of entering?—whither turn me ?

The solitude within shall drive me forth,

Whenso I see my wife's couch tenantless,

And seats whereon she sat, and, 'neath the roof,

All foul the floor ; when on my knees my babes

Falling shall weep their mother, servants moan

The peerless mistress from the mansion lost.

All this within : but from the world without

950

Me shall Thessalian bridals chase, and throngs

Where women gossip—oh, I shall not bear

On these, young matrons like my wife, to look !

And whatsoever foe I have shall scoff :

“ Lo there who basely liveth—dared not die,

“ But whom he wedded gave, a coward's ransom,

“ And 'scaped from Hades. Count ye him a man ?

“ He hates his parents, though himself was loth

“ To die ! ” Such ill report, besides my griefs,

Shall mine be. Ah, what honour is mine to live,

960

O friends, in evil fame, in evil plight ?

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ἐγὼ καὶ διὰ μούσας
καὶ μετάρσιος ἦξα, καὶ
πλείστων ἀψάμενος λόγων
κρείσσον οὐδὲν Ἀνάγκας
ἡῦρον, οὐδέ τι φάρμακον
Θρήσσαις ἐν σανίσιν, τὰς
Ὀρφεία κατέγραψεν
γῆρυς, οὐδ' ὅσα Φοῖβος Ἀ-
σκληπιάδαις ἔδωκε
φάρμακα πολυπόνοις
ἀντιτεμὼν βροτοῖσιν.

στρ. α'

μόνας δ' οὐτ' ἐπὶ βωμοὺς
ἔστιν οὔτε βρέτας θεᾶς
ἐλθεῖν, οὐ σφαγίων κλύει.
μή μοι, πότνια, μείζων
ἔλθοις ἢ τὸ πρὶν ἐν βίῳ.
καὶ γὰρ Ζεὺς ὅ τι νεύσῃ,
σὺν σοὶ τοῦτο τελευτᾷ.
καὶ τὸν ἐν Χαλύβοις δαμά-
ξεις σὺ βία σίδαρον,
οὐδέ τις ἀποτόμου
λήματός ἐστιν αἰδώς.

ἀντ. α'

καὶ σ' ἐν ἀφύκτοισι χερῶν εἴλε θεὰ δεσμοῖς.
τόλμα δ' οὐ γὰρ ἀνάξεις ποτ' ἔνερθεν

στρ. β'

ALCESTIS

CHORUS

(*Str.* 1)

I have mused on the words of the wise,
Of the mighty in song;
I have lifted mine heart to the skies,
I have searched all truth with mine eyes;
But naught more strong
Than Fate have I found : there is naught
In the tablets of Thrace,
Neither drugs whereof Orpheus taught,
Nor in all that Apollo brought 970
To Asclepius' race,
When the herbs of healing he severed, and out of
their anguish delivered
The pain-distraught.

There is none other Goddess beside (*Ant.* 1)

To the altars of whom
No man draweth near, nor hath cried
To her image, nor victim hath died,
Averting her doom.
O Goddess, more mighty for ill
Come not upon me
Than in days overpast : for his will
Even Zeus may in no wise fulfil
Unholpen of thee.
Steel is molten as water before thee, but never
relenting came o'er thee, 980
Who art ruthless still.

(*Str.* 2)

Thee, friend, hath the Goddess gripped : from her
hands never wrestler hath slipped.
Yet be strong to endure : never mourning shall bring
our beloved returning

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

κλαίων τοὺς φθιμένους ἄνω.
καὶ θεῶν σκότιοι φθίνουσι
990 παῖδες ἐν θανάτῳ.
φίλα μὲν ὅτ' ἦν μεθ' ἡμῶν,
φίλα δὲ †καὶ θανούσ' ἔσται†.
γενναιοτάταν δὲ πασᾶν
ἐξεύξω κλισίαις ἄκοιτιν.

ἀντ. β

μηδὲ νεκρῶν ὡς φθιμένων χῶμα νομιζέσθω
τύμβος σᾶς ἀλόχου, θεοῖσι δ' ὁμοίως
τιμάσθω, σέβας ἐμπόρων.
1000 καὶ τις δοχμίαν κέλευθον
ἐμβαίνων τόδ' ἐρεῖ·
αὐτα ποτὲ προὔθαν' ἀνδρός,
νῦν δ' ἐστὶ μάκαιρα δαίμων·
χαῖρ', ὦ πότνι', εὖ δὲ δοίης.
τοιαῖ νιν προσερούσι φᾶμαι.

καὶ μὴν ὅδ', ὡς ἔοικεν, Ἀλκμήνης γόνος,
Ἄδμητε, πρὸς σὴν ἐστίαν πορεύεται.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

φίλον πρὸς ἄνδρα χρὴ λέγειν ἐλευθέρως,
Ἄδμητε, μομφὰς δ' οὐχ ὑπὸ σπλάγχνοις ἔχειν
1010 σιγῶντ'. ἐγὼ δὲ σοῖς κακοῖσιν ἡξίουν
ἐγγὺς παρεστὼς ἐξετάζεσθαι φίλος·
σὺ δ' οὐκ ἔφραζες σῆς προκείμενον νέκυν
γυναικός, ἀλλὰ μ' ἐξένιζες ἐν δόμοις,
ὡς δὴ θυραίου πῆματος σπουδὴν ἔχων.

ALCESTIS

From the nethergloom up to the light.
Yea, the heroes of Gods begotten,
They fade into darkness, forgotten
In death's chill night.

990

Dear was she in days ere we lost her,
Dear yet, though she lie with the dead.
None nobler shall Earth-mother foster
Than the wife of thy bed.

(Ant. 2)

Not as mounds of the dead which have died, so
account we the tomb of thy bride ;
But O, let the worship and honour that we render to
Gods rest upon her :

Unto her let the wayfarer pray.
As he treadeth the pathway that trendeth
Aside from the highway, and bendeth

1000

At her-shrine, he shall say :
" Her life for her lord's was given ;
With the Blest now abides she on high.
Hail, Queen, show us grace from thine
heaven ! "

Even so shall they cry.

But lo, Alcmena's son, as seemeth, yonder,
Admetus, to thine hearth is journeying.
Enter HERCULES, leading a woman wholly veiled.

HERCULES

Unto a friend behoveth speech outspoken,
Admetus, not to hide within the breast
Murmurs unvoiced. I came mid thine affliction :
Fair claim was mine to rank amidst thy friends :
Thou told'st me not how lay thy wife a corpse ;
Thou gavest me guest-welcome in thine home,
Making pretence of mourning for a stranger.

1010

491

1020 κάσπεψα κράτα καὶ θεοῖς ἐλειψάμην
 σπονδας ἐν οἴκοις δυστυχοῦσι τοῖσι σοῖς.
 καὶ μέμφομαι μὲν μέμφομαι παθὼν τάδε,
 οὐ μὴν σε λυπεῖν ἐν κακοῖσι βούλομαι.
 ὦν δ' εἵνεχ' ἤκω δεῦρ' ὑποστρέψας πάλιν
 λέξω. γυναῖκα τήνδε μοι σῶσον λαβών,
 ἕως ἂν ἵππους δεῦρο Θρηκίᾳς ἄγων
 ἔλθω, τύραννον Βιστόνων κατακτανών.
 πράξας δ' ὃ μὴ τύχοιμι, νοστήσαιμι γάρ,
 δίδωμι τήνδε σοῖσι προσπολεῖν δόμοις.
 πολλῶ δὲ μόχθῳ χεῖρας ἦλθεν εἰς ἐμάς·
 ἀγῶνα γὰρ πάνδημον εὐρίσκω τινὰς
 τιθέντας, ἀθληταῖσιν ἄξιον πόνον,
 ὅθεν κομίζω τήνδε νικητήρια
 λαβών· τὰ μὲν γὰρ κοῦφα τοῖς νικῶσιν ἦν
 1030 ἵππους ἄγεσθαι, τοῖσι δ' αὖ τὰ μείζονα
 νικῶσι, πνυγμὴν καὶ πάλην, βουφόρβια·
 γυνὴ δ' ἐπ' αὐτοῖς εἶπετ'· ἐντυχόντι δὲ
 αἰσχρὸν παρεῖναι κέρδος ἦν τόδ' εὐκλεές.
 ἀλλ', ὥσπερ εἶπον, σοὶ μέλειν γυναῖκα χρή·
 οὐ γὰρ κλοπαίαν, ἀλλὰ σὺν πόνῳ λαβὼν
 ἤκω· χρόνῳ δὲ καὶ σύ μ' αἰνέσεις ἴσως.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

1040 οὐτοὶ σ' ἀτίζων οὐδ' ἐν ἐχθροῖσιν τιθεῖς
 ἔκρυνψ' ἐμῆς γυναικὸς ἀθλίους τύχας·
 ἀλλ' ἄλγος ἄλγει τοῦτ' ἂν ἦν προσκείμενον,
 εἴ του πρὸς ἄλλου δώμαθ' ὠρμήθης ξένου·
 αἷλις δὲ κλαλεῖν τοῦμόν ἦν ἐμοὶ κακόν.
 γυναῖκα δ', εἴ πως ἔστιν, αἰτοῦμαί σ', ἄναξ,
 ἄλλον τιν' ὅστις μὴ πέπονθεν οὔ' ἐγὼ
 σῶζειν ἄνωχθι Θεσσαλῶν· πολλοὶ δέ σοι
 ξένοι Φεραίων· μὴ μ' ἀναμνήσης κακῶν.

ALCESTIS

I wreathed mine head, I spilled unto the Gods
Drink-offerings in a stricken house, even thine.
I blame thee, thus mishandled, yea, I blame ;
Yet nowise is my will to gall thy grief.

But wherefore hither turning back I come,
This will I tell. Take, guard for me this maid, 1020
Till, leading hitherward the Thracian mares,
I come from slaughter of Bistonia's lord.
But if I fall—no, no ! *I must* return !—
I give her then, for service of thine halls.
Prize of hard toil unto mine hands she came :
For certain men I found but now arraying
An athlete-strife, toil-worthy, for all comers,
Whence I have won and bring this victor's meed.

Horses there were for them to take which won
The light foot's triumph ; but for hero-strife, 1030
Boxing and wrestling, oxen were the guerdon ;
A woman made it richer. Shame it seemed
To hap thereon, and slip this glorious gain.
But, as I said, this woman be thy care ;
For no thief's prize, but toil-achieved, I bring her.
Yea, one day thou perchance shalt say 'twas well.

ADMETUS

Not flouting thee, nor counting among foes,
My wife's unhappy fate I hid from thee.
But this had been but grief uppled on grief,
Hadst thou sped hence to be another's guest ; 1040
And mine own ills sufficed me to bewail.
Yon maid—I pray thee, if it may be, prince,
Bid some Thessalian ward her, who hath not
Suffered as I : thou hast many friends in Pherae.
Oh, waken not remembrance of my grief !

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

- οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην τήνδ' ὀρώων ἐν δώμασιν
 ἄδακρυς εἶναι· μὴ νοσοῦντί μοι νόσον
 προσθῆς· ἄλῃς γὰρ συμφορᾷ βαρύνομαι.
 1050· ποῦ καὶ τρέφοιτ' ἂν δωμάτων νέα γυνή;
 νέα γάρ, ὥς ἐσθήτι καὶ κόσμῳ πρέπει.
 πότερα μετ' ἀνδρῶν δῆτ' ἐνοικήσει στέγην;
 καὶ πῶς ἀκραιφνῆς ἐν νέοις στρωφωμένα
 ἔσται; τὸν ἡβῶνθ', Ἡράκλεις, οὐ ῥάδιον
 εἶργειν· ἐγὼ δὲ σοῦ προμηθίαν ἔχω.
 ἢ τῆς θανούσης θάλαμον εἰσβήσας τρέφω;
 καὶ πῶς ἐπεισφρῶ τήνδε τῷ κείνης λέχει;
 διπλὴν φοβοῦμαι μέμψιν, ἐκ τε δημοτῶν,
 μή τίς μ' ἐλέγξῃ τὴν ἐμὴν εὐεργέτιν
 1060· προδόντ' ἐν ἄλλης δεμνίοις πίτνειν νέας,
 καὶ τῆς θανούσης· ἄξία δ' ἐμοὶ σέβειν·
 πολλὴν πρόνοιαν δεῖ μ' ἔχειν. σὺ δ', ὦ γύναι,
 ἥτις ποτ' εἰ σύ, ταῦτ' ἔχουσ' Ἀλκῆστιδι
 μορφῆς μέτρ' ἴσθι καὶ προσήϊξαι δέμας.
 οἴμοι. κόμιζε πρὸς θεῶν ἐξ ὀμμάτων
 γυναῖκα τήνδε, μή μ' ἔλῃς ἡρημένον.
 δοκῶ γὰρ αὐτὴν εἰσορῶν γυναῖχ' ὀρᾶν
 ἐμήν· θολοῖ δὲ καρδίαν, ἐκ δ' ὀμμάτων
 πηγαὶ κατερρώγασιν· ὦ τλήμων ἐγώ,
 ὥς ἄρτι πένθους τοῦδε γεύομαι πικροῦ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

- 1070· ἐγὼ μὲν οὐκ ἔχοιμ' ἂν εὖ λέγειν τύχην·
 χρὴ δ', ὅστις εἰσι, καρτερεῖν θεοῦ δόσιν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰ γὰρ τοσαύτην δύναμιν εἶχον ὥστε σὴν
 εἰς φῶς πορεύσαι νερτέρων ἐκ δωμάτων
 γυναῖκα καὶ σοι τήνδε πορσύναι χάριν.

ALCESTIS

I could not, seeing her mine halls within,
Be tearless : add not hurt unto mine hurt ;
Burdened enough am I by mine affliction.
Nay, in mine house where should a young maid
lodge?—

For vesture and adorning speak her young :— 1050
What, 'neath the men's roof shall her lodging be ?
And how unsullied, dwelling with young men ?
Not easy is it, Hercules, to curb
The young : herein do I take thought for thee.
Or shall I ope to her my dead wife's bower ?
How !—cause her to usurp my lost love's bed ?
Twofold reproach I dread—first, from my folk,
Lest any say that, traitor to my saviour,
I fall upon another woman's bed ;
Then, from my dead wife—oh, she is reverence-
worthy !— 1060

Of her thou I be heedful. Woman, thou,
Whoso thou art, know that thy body's stature
Is as Alcestis, and thy form as hers.
Ah me !—lead, for the Gods' sake, from my sight
This woman ! Take not my captivity captive.
For, as I look on her, methinks I see
My wife : she stirs mine heart with turmoil : fountains
Of tears burst from mine eyes. O wretched I !
Now first I taste this grief's full bitterness.

CHORUS

In sooth thy fortune can I not commend : 1070
Yet all Heaven's visitations must we bear.

HERCULES

O that such might I had as back to bring
To light thy wife from nethergloom abodes,
And to bestow this kindness upon thee !

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

σάφ' οἶδα βούλεσθαι σ' ἄν. ἄλλὰ ποῦ τόδε ;
οὐκ ἔστι τοὺς θανόντας εἰς φάος μολεῖν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μή νυν ὑπέρβαλλ', ἀλλ' ἐναισίμως φέρε.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ῥᾶον παραινεῖν ἢ παθόντα καρτερεῖν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δ' ἂν προκόπτοις, εἰ θέλοις ἀεὶ στένειν ;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

1080 ἔγνωκα καὐτός, ἀλλ' ἔρωσ τις ἐξάγει.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τὸ γὰρ φιλῆσαι τὸν θανόντ' ἄγει δάκρυ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἀπώλεσθ' ἐν με, καῖτι μᾶλλον ἢ λέγω.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

γυναικὸς ἐσθλῆς ἤμπλακες· τίς ἀντερεῖ ;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὥστ' ἄνδρα τόνδε μηκέθ' ἦδεσθαι βίῳ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

χρόνος μαλάξει, νῦν δ' ἔθ' ἡβᾷ σοι κακόν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

χρόνον λέγοις ἄν, εἰ χρόνος τὸ κατθανεῖν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

γυνή σε παύσει καὶ νέου γάμου πόθοι.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

σίγησον· οἶον εἶπας. οὐκ ἂν ὥομην.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τί δ' ; οὐ γαμεῖς γάρ, ἀλλὰ χηρεύσει λέχος ;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

1090 οὐκ ἔστιν ἥτις τῷδε συγκλιθήσεται.

ALCESTIS

ADMETUS

•Fain would'st thou, well I know. But wherefore this?
It cannot be the dead to light should come.

HERCULES

O'ershoot not thou the mark ; bear bravely all.

ADMETUS

Easier to exhort than suffer and be strong.

HERCULES

But what thy profit, though for aye thou moan?

ADMETUS

I too know this ; yet love drives me distraught. 1080

HERCULES

Love for the lost—ay, that draws forth the tear.

ADMETUS

She hath undone me more than words can tell.

HERCULES

A good wife hast thou lost, who shall gainsay?

ADMETUS

So that thy friend hath no more joy in life.

HERCULES

Time shall bring healing ; now is thy grief young.

ADMETUS

Time—time ?—O yea, if this thy Time be Death!

HERCULES

A young wife, new love-yearning, shall console thee.

ADMETUS

Hush !—what say'st thou ?—I could not think there-
on !

HERCULES

How ?—wilt not wed, but widowed keep thy couch ?

ADMETUS

Lives not the woman that shall couch with me. 1090

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

μῶν τὴν θανούσαν ὠφελεῖν τι προσδοκᾷς ;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

κείνην ὅπουπερ ἔστι τιμᾶσθαι χρεών.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

αἰνῶ μὲν αἰνῶ· μωρίαν δ' ὀφλίσκάνεις.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὥς μήποτ' ἄνδρα τόνδε νυμφίον καλῶν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἐπήνεσ' ἀλόχῳ πιστὸς οὔνεκ' εἰ φίλος.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

θάνοιμ' ἐκείνην καίπερ οὐκ οὔσαν προδούς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

δέχου νυν εἴσω τήνδε γενναίων δόμων.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

μή, πρὸς σε τοῦ σπείραντος ἄντομαι Διός.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

καὶ μὴν ἁμαρτήσῃ γε μὴ δράσας τάδε.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

1100 καὶ δρῶν γε λύπη καρδίαν δηχθήσομαι.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πιθοῦ· τάχ' ἂν γὰρ εἰς δέον πέσοι χάρις.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

φεῦ·

εἴθ' ἐξ ἀγῶνος τήνδε μὴ ἴλαβές ποτε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

νικῶντι μέντοι καὶ σὺ συννικᾷς ἐμοί.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

καλῶς ἔλεξας· ἡ γυνὴ δ' ἀπελθέτω.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἄπεισιν, εἰ χρή· πρῶτα δ' εἰ χρεῶν ἄθρει.

ALCESTIS

HERCULES

Look'st thou that this shall profit aught the dead ?

ADMETUS

I needs must honour her where'er she be.

HERCULES

Good—good—yet this the world calls foolishness.

ADMETUS

So be it, so thou call me bridegroom never.

HERCULES

I praise thee, in that leal thou art to her.

ADMETUS

I?—false to her, though dead?—may I die first !

HERCULES

Receive this woman then these halls within.

ADMETUS

Nay !—I implore thee by thy father Zeus !

HERCULES

Yet shalt thou err if thou do not this thing.

ADMETUS

Yet shall mine heart be tortured, if I do it. 1100

HERCULES

Yield thou : this grace may prove perchance a duty.

ADMETUS

O that in strife thou ne'er hadst won this maid !

HERCULES

Yet thy friend's victory is surely thine.

ADMETUS

Well said : yet let the woman hence depart.

HERCULES

Yea—if need be. First look well—need it be ?

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

χρή, σοῦ γε μὴ μέλλοντος ὀργαίνειν ἐμοί.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰδώς τι καὶ γὰρ τήνδ' ἔχω προθυμίαν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

νίκα νυν. οὐ μὴν ἀνδάνοντά μοι ποιεῖς.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἀλλ' ἔσθ' ὅθ' ἡμᾶς αἰνέσεις· πιθοῦ μόνον.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

1110

κομίζετ', εἰ χρή τήνδε δέξασθαι δόμοις.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἂν μεθείην τὴν γυναῖκα προσπόλοις.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

σὺ δ' αὐτὸς αὐτὴν εἴσαγ', εἰ βούλει, δόμους.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

εἰς σὰς μὲν οὖν ἔγωγε θήσομαι χέρας.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

οὐκ ἂν θίγοιμι· δώματ' εἰσελθεῖν πάρα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τῇ σῇ πέποιθα χεὶρὶ δεξιᾷ μόνῃ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἄναξ, βιάζει μ' οὐ θέλοντα δρᾶν τάδε.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τόλμα προτείνει χεῖρα καὶ θιγεῖν ξένης.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

καὶ δὴ προτείνω, Γοργόν' ὥς καρατομῶν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἔχεις ;

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἔχω.

ALCESTIS

ADMETUS

Needs must—save thou wilt else be wroth with me.

HERCULES

I too know what I do, insisting thus.

ADMETUS

Have then thy will : thy pleasure is my pain.

HERCULES

Yet one day shalt thou praise me : only yield.

ADMETUS (*to attendants*)

Lead ye her, if mine halls must needs receive.

1110

HERCULES

Nay, to no servants' hands will I commit her.

ADMETUS

Thou lead her in then, if it seems thee good.

HERCULES

Nay, but in thine hands will I place her—thine.

ADMETUS

I will not touch her ! Open stand my doors.

HERCULES

Unto thy right hand only trust I her.

ADMETUS

King, thou dost force me, sore against my will !

HERCULES

Be strong : stretch forth thine hand and touch thy guest.

ADMETUS (*turning his face away*)

I do, as one who doth behead a Gorgon.

HERCULES

Hast her ?

ADMETUS

I have.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1120 ναί, σῶζέ νυν, καὶ τὸν Διὸς
 φήσεις ποτ' εἶναι παῖδα γενναῖον ξένον.
 βλέψον πρὸς αὐτήν, εἴ τι σῇ δοκεῖ πρέπειν
 γυναικί· λύπης δ' εὐτυχῶν μεθίστασο.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὦ θεοί, τί λέξω ; θαῦμ' ἀνέλπιστον τόδε
 γυναῖκα λεύσσω τὴν ἐμὴν ἐτητύμως,
 ἣ κέρτομός με θεοῦ τις ἐκπλήσσει χαρά ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐκ ἔστιν, ἀλλὰ τήνδ' ὀρᾶς δάμαρτα σήν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὄρα γε μή τι φάσμα νερτέρων τόδ' ἦ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὐ ψυχαγωγὸν τόνδ' ἐποιήσω ξένον.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἀλλ' ἦν ἔθαπτον εἰσορῶ δάμαρτ' ἐμὴν ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1130 σάφ' ἴσθ'. ἀπιστεῖν δ' οὐ σε θαυμάζω τύχην.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

θίγω, προσείπω ζῶσαν ὡς δάμαρτ' ἐμὴν ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

πρόσειπ'. ἔχεις γὰρ πᾶν ὅσονπερ ἤθελες.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὦ φιλτάτης γυναικὸς ὄμμα καὶ δέμας,
 ἔχω σ' ἀέλπτως, οὐ ποτ' ὄψεσθαι δοκῶν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

ἔχεις· φθόνος δὲ μὴ γένοιτό τις θεῶν.

ALCESTIS

HERCULES

Yea, guard her. Thou shalt call
The child of Zeus one day a noble guest. 1120

[*Raises the veil, and discloses* ALCESTIS.]

Look on her, if in aught she seems to thee
Like to thy wife. Step forth from grief to bliss.

ADMETUS

What shall I say?—Gods! Marvel this unhopèd for!
My wife do I behold in very sooth,
Or doth some god-sent mockery-joy distract me?

HERCULES

Not so; but this thou seest is thy wife.

ADMETUS

What if this be some phantom from the shades?

HERCULES

No ghost-upraiser hast thou ta'en for guest.

ADMETUS

How?—whom I buried do I see—my wife?

HERCULES

Doubt not: yet might'st thou well mistrust thy
fortune. 1130

ADMETUS

As wife, as living, may I touch, address her?

HERCULES

Speak to her: all thou didst desire thou hast.

ADMETUS

Oh dearest!—wife!—sweet face!—belovèd form!
Past hope I have thee! Never I thought to see
thee!

HERCULES

Thou hast: may no God of thy bliss be jealous.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ὦ τοῦ μεγίστου Ζηνὸς εὐγενὲς τέκνον,
εὐδαιμονοίης, καὶ σ' ὁ φιτύσας πατὴρ
σφῶζοι· σὺ γὰρ δὴ τᾶμ' ἀνώρθωσας μόνος.
πῶς τήνδ' ἔπεμψας νέρθεν εἰς φάος τόδε ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

1140

μάχην συνάψας δαιμόνων τῷ κυρίῳ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ποῦ τόνδε Θανάτῳ φῆς ἀγῶνα συμβαλεῖν ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

τύμβον παρ' αὐτὸν ἐκ λόχου μάρψας χεροῖν.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

τί γάρ ποθ' ἦδ' ἄναυδος ἔστηκεν γυνή ;

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

οὔπω θέμις σοι τῆσδε προσφωνημάτων
κλύειν, πρὶν ἂν θεοῖσι τοῖσι νερτέροις
ἀφαγνίσσηται καὶ τρίτον μόλῃ φάος.
ἀλλ' εἴσαγ' εἴσω τήνδε· καὶ δίκαιος ὦν
τὸ λοιπόν, Ἄδμητ', εὐσέβει περὶ ξένους.
καὶ χαῖρ'· ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν προκείμενον πόνον
Σθενέλου τυράννῳ παιδὶ πορσυνῶ μολών.

1150

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

μείνον παρ' ἡμῖν καὶ συνέστιος γενοῦ.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ

αὐθις τόδ' ἔσται, νῦν δ' ἐπείγεσθαί με δεῖ.

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ἀλλ' εὐτυχοίης, νόστιμον δ' ἔλθοις ὁδόν.
ἀστοῖς δὲ πάσῃ τ' ἐννέπῳ τετραρχία,
χοροὺς ἐπ' ἐσθλαῖς συμφοραῖσιν ιστάναι
βωμούς τε κνισᾶν βουθύτοισι προστροπαῖς.

ALCESTIS

ADMETUS

O scion nobly-born of Zeus most high,
Blessings on thee ! The Father who begat thee
Keep thee ! Thou only hast restored my fortunes.
How didst thou bring her from the shades to light ?

HERCULES

I closed in conflict with the Lord of Spirits. 1140

ADMETUS

Where, say'st thou, didst thou fight this fight with
Death ?

HERCULES

From ambush by the tomb mine hands ensnared him.

ADMETUS

Now wherefore speechless standeth thus my wife ?

HERCULES

'Tis not vouchsafed thee yet to hear her voice,
Ere to the Powers beneath the earth she be
Unconsecrated, and the third day come.
But lead her in, and, just man as thou art,
Henceforth, Admetus, reverence still the guest.
Farewell. But I must go, and work the work
Set by the king, the son of Sthenelus. 1150

ADMETUS

Abide with us, a sharer of our hearth.

HERCULES

Hereafter this : now must I hasten on.

ADMETUS

O prosper thou, and come again in peace !

[Exit HERCULES.]

Through all my realm I publish to my folk
That, for these blessings, dances they array,
And that atonement-fumes from altars rise.

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

νῦν γὰρ μεθηρμόσμεσθα βελτίῳ βίῳ
τοῦ πρόσθεν· οὐ γὰρ εὐτυχῶν ἀρνήσομαι.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

1180

πολλαὶ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων,
πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεοί·
καὶ τὰ δοκηθέντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,
τῶν δ' ἀδοκῆτων πόρον ἤνυρε θεός.
οἷόνδ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα.

ALCESTIS

For now to happier days than those o'erpast
Have we attained. I own me blest indeed.

CHORUS

O the works of the Gods—in manifold forms they
reveal them :

Manifold things unhopèd-for the Gods to accom-
plishment bring.

1160

And the things that we looked for, the Gods deign
not to fulfil them ;

And the paths undiscerned of our eyes, the Gods
unseal them.

So fell this marvellous thing.

[*Exeunt OMNES.*

END OF VOL. IV

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